





A  
**LETTER**  
TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
**GEORGE CANNING,**  
ON  
**THE BILL OF 1825,**  
FOR  
MOVING THE DISQUALIFICATIONS OF HIS MAJESTY'S  
ROMAN CATHOLIC SUBJECTS,  
AND ON  
HIS SPEECH IN SUPPORT OF THE SAME.

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BY  
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TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
**GEORGE CANNING.**

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SIR,

IT is with unfeigned reluctance that I thus publicly address you on the most important question which can engage the attention either of Parliament or the country. When I was first induced to enter into this discussion, my sole object was to vindicate certain doctrines of our Reformed Church from the gross misconceptions and misrepresentations to which they had been subjected: but I soon found the theological part of the argument to be so closely interwoven with the political, that it was hardly possible to keep them separate. You, Sir, appear to have experienced the same difficulty; and if a Statesman, in the discussion of the political question, has found himself entangled in the mazes of polemics, it is not to be wondered, that a Churchman, in treating the

same matter, has been compelled to extend his inquiries into the region of politics. This consideration alone, will, I am confident, make all apology for my present address to you unnecessary ; and I will not trespass on your patience by affecting to offer any. Let me only say, that if in the free examination of opinions publicly proclaimed by you, I shall at all depart from the respect which is due to your high station, to your splendid talents, and above all, to your distinguished character, you will find it much easier to forgive me, than I shall be willing to forgive myself.

The note of hostile preparation, which has been loudly sounded by the Roman Catholics of Ireland, announces to us an early renewal of their claims to a full participation in all the powers of the state. What particular course, in the furtherance of their object, will be adopted by their advocates, and especially by yourself, it is not easy to foresee ; but in the absence of other information, we may reasonably look back to the last occasion of discussing the question, to the Bill which was then passed by the House of Commons, and to the language and arguments, with which you, Sir, by far the most powerful champion of their cause, thought fit to support it. That greater securities for our

established institutions will now be offered, past experience forbids us to expect. Hitherto, every new application to Parliament has been marked by some important diminution of the securities before proposed. Like the Sibyl's fatal volumes, the price, which we are required to pay for them, continues still the same; while they themselves are so deplorably reduced, as scarcely to retain a faint semblance of what we were once told was indispensable to our safety. Still, as in the Sibyl's case, there are not wanting those, who earnestly conjure us to purchase, at any cost, even the miserable remnant, which may yet be had.

Sir, there is something so very peculiar in the history of these Securities, and it has so obvious and essential a connection with the subject of this letter, that I must request your indulgence while I trespass on you with a review of some of its most important particulars.

It is well known, that so long ago as 1799, Mr. Pitt entertained, and acted upon, the hope, that means might be devised to combine the extension of equal political rights to the Roman Catholics, with due precautions for the security of our Protestant Church and government. What was his intended plan, was never publicly announced by him; perhaps it was never com-

pletely formed. But in the last speech, which he delivered in Parliament on this subject, he thus expressed himself.

“ I have never been one of those who have  
“ held, that the term ‘ Emancipation’ is, in the  
“ smallest degree, applicable to the repeal of  
“ the few remaining penal statutes, to which  
“ the (Roman) Catholics are still liable. But,  
“ possibly, in my view of the grounds of expediency, I may think it to be much more contradistinguished from the question of right, than the honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) does. He seems to consider, that there is only a shade of difference between the expediency and the right: whereas in my view of the difference, it is broad, evident, and fundamental. I consider right as independent of circumstances, and paramount to them, whilst expediency is connected with circumstances, and, in a great measure, dependent upon them. With regard to the admission of (Roman) Catholics to franchises, to the elective franchise, or to any of those posts and offices, which have been alluded to, I view all these points as distinctions to be given, not for the sake of the person and the individual who is to possess them, but for the sake of the public, for whose benefit they

“ were created, and for whose advantage they  
“ are to be exercised. In all times, therefore,  
“ and upon every occasion, whether relating  
“ to the Roman Catholic or the Protestant dis-  
“ senter, to the people of Ireland or to the  
“ people of England, I have always, from a  
“ due regard to the constitution, been of opi-  
“ nion, that we are bound to consider, not  
“ merely what is desired by a part, but what  
“ is best and most advantageous to the whole.”

Sir, I have quoted thus much, to show the principle which guided and restricted that great man in all that *he* did and said on this important subject. Would to heaven, that all who call and believe themselves his disciples, were guided by the same principle! If they were, we should not have to lament, that the language, which I shall cite hereafter, has ever issued from one of his school: much less, that you, Sir, so worthy in many respects to succeed and represent your great master, should be still found amongst the adherents of a Cause, which has formally and solemnly rejected, not only the authority, but also the principles, of Mr. Pitt.\*

“ My idea,” he continued, “ was, not to

\* “ The British Catholic Association ” passed a resolution to this effect in the course of last summer.



“ apply tests to the religious tenets of the  
“ (Roman) Catholics, but tests applicable to  
“ what was the source and foundation of the  
“ evil; to render the priests, instead of making  
“ them the instruments of poisoning the minds  
“ of the people, dependent, in some sort, upon  
“ the government, and thus links, as it were,  
“ between the government and the people.  
“ *That would have been a wise and comprehensive*  
“ *system*; that would have been the system,  
“ which I should have felt it to be my wish,  
“ and thought it to have been my duty, to have  
“ proposed. I never thought, that it would  
“ have been wise or prudent, to have thrown  
“ down rudely or abruptly the guards and  
“ fences of the constitution; but I did think,  
“ that if the system I have alluded to had been  
“ deemed proper to be adopted, it ought to  
“ have been accompanied with those checks and  
“ guards,—and with every regulation that could  
“ have given *additional respect and influence to the*  
“ *established Church*, to the *support and protection*  
“ *of the Protestant interests*, and to the encour-  
“ agement of every measure which could tend  
“ *to propagate, and spread the example of, the*  
“ *Protestant religion.*”

These, Sir, were the general views and intentions of Mr. Pitt on this subject; views and



intentions, from which, to his great and (I am sorry to add) his almost *singular* honour, he was never known to swerve.

On an earlier day of the same sessions, in which Mr. Pitt thus addressed the lower House, Lord Grenville had moved that the House of Lords “should resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to take the petition of the Roman Catholics of Ireland into consideration.” In doing this, “I ask of you,” said he, “no immediate or specific grant, because I am not prepared to say, what *other measures, healing and salutary*, ought to accompany the adoption of my motion. *Many there are*, but this is not the fit occasion for stating them.”

But, at a subsequent period, May 27, 1808, that noble Lord, having declared that “the removal of every remaining civil disability, on account of religious belief, must be a part only of a large and comprehensive system,” proceeded thus,—“It was so considered by that great statesman, now no more, of whom I never think but with the warmest affection, respect, and admiration. Our opinions on this subject were not only in complete unison, but I may truly say they were formed together by mutual communication and unre-

“ served confidence. The plans, which were  
“ then in contemplation, included, in the first  
“ place, measures of considerable benefit to the  
“ established Church; calculated to promote  
“ both its honour and its advantages, and to  
“ render it far more adequate, than it now can  
“ be, to the purposes for which it was pro-  
“ vided. A short statement will convince your  
“ Lordships, what ample occasion this matter  
“ alone affords for the exercise of your wisdom  
“ and liberality.—It appears that 2,400 pa-  
“ rishes in Ireland are now consolidated into  
“ little more than 1,100 benefices; of which  
“ reduced number more than a tenth part are  
“ absolutely without churches, and not 400  
“ have glebe houses. Surely your Lordships  
“ must see, in such a state of things, better  
“ means of assisting the established Church,  
“ more satisfactory measures to be taken for  
“ the encouragement of the Protestant religion,  
“ than by any laws of exclusion or intole-  
“ rance.

“ Nor had the situation of the dissenters, by  
“ far the most numerous Protestants in that  
“ country, been overlooked. Measures were  
“ in contemplation for increasing the provision,  
“ which the wisdom of government had long  
“ since granted to their ministers.

“ The state of the (Roman) Catholic Church in  
“ Ireland, administering to the spiritual wants  
“ of four millions of your people, had also been  
“ an object of deliberate consideration. Much  
“ has been said of the influence of their bishops,  
“ and great stress has been laid on the dangers  
“ of a (Roman) Catholic hierarchy. If you  
“ tolerate the Roman Catholic Church, which  
“ is episcopal, you must of course allow it to  
“ have its bishops. But, *it is unquestionably*  
“ *proper that the Crown should exercise an effec-*  
“ *tual negative* over the appointment of the per-  
“ sons called to execute those functions. *To*  
“ *this the (Roman) Catholics of Ireland declare*  
“ *themselves perfectly ready to accede.* Their de-  
“ claration on this subject is an unquestionable  
“ proof of *their solicitude to meet the kindness of*  
“ *their fellow-subjects, and to accede to any practi-*  
“ *cable means of removing even the most groundless*  
“ *jealousies.* As such, I rejoice that it has been  
“ made, and *I see with infinite satisfaction the*  
“ *just impression which it has universally pro-*  
“ *duced.* To me it is not new. *I always felt*  
“ *the propriety of providing for this point.* It  
“ formed a part of the plans to be brought for-  
“ ward at the period of the Union; and what  
“ we then knew of the sentiments of the  
“ (Roman) Catholics respecting it, left no

“doubt upon our minds, that the matter might  
“be easily and satisfactorily adjusted. Pro-  
“vision was also intended to be made, for the  
“decent and necessary subsistence of the  
“(Roman) Catholic clergy of that country.  
“The propriety of this step rests on grounds  
“of policy and reason, which will not be  
“questioned. On this point, I believe, all are  
“agreed. I mention it only as one of the many  
“measures, which call for inquiry and adoption.

“Many of the most plausible arguments  
“against the petitions of the (Roman) Catho-  
“lics, are drawn from the objections to the  
“Oath of Supremacy. We are often told, that  
“(Roman) Catholics refuse to acknowledge the  
“same obedience to their sovereign, which he  
“receives from all his other subjects. The  
“charge is wholly groundless. They recog-  
“nize, as you do, in the civil government of  
“their country, all temporal power and autho-  
“rity. *If more security be necessary, let it be*  
“*exacted.* It was intended, at the period to  
“which I have so often referred, to submit to  
“parliament, in lieu of the Oath of Supremacy,  
“framed, as we all know, for the purpose of  
“exclusion, a new form of oath, calculated to  
“unite, not to divide the people. That oath  
“would have contained *an explicit pledge of*

“ *support to the established constitution, and the*  
“ *most express disclaimer that could be devised of*  
“ *any interference with his majesty’s legitimate*  
“ *and undoubted authority.* Whatever words  
“ may be most effectual for this purpose, let  
“ them be adopted ; *provide the fullest security*  
“ *that jealousy itself can dictate, for that which we*  
“ *are all equally anxious to defend :* and let it then  
“ be seen, whether the (Roman) Catholics of  
“ Ireland are reluctant to concur in that de-  
“ claration.

“ There is yet another subject,—I mean the  
“ matter of Tithes. It was carefully considered  
“ at the period of the Union, and was intended  
“ then to be brought forward, &c.

“ I have thus enumerated, however imper-  
“ fectly, the various measures with which the  
“ great statesman, of whom I have spoken,  
“ always meant to accompany the proposal of  
“ the repeal of every civil disqualification,  
“ which still attaches upon religious belief.  
“ Great and important safeguards they were,  
“ in my judgment, for the civil and ecclesiasti-  
“ cal constitution of the realm, &c. *I know of*  
“ *no other means adequate to such purposes.*”

Thus, Sir, was Mr. Pitt’s scheme of securities  
announced to the world by that nobleman,  
who, above all others, had enjoyed his confi-



dence, and participated in his labours. It was commended to the favour of the country at large, by being accompanied by the authoritative offer, as it was at the time understood, on the part of the Roman Catholic bishops, of granting to the crown that *effectual negative* in the appointment of their future brethren, which formed one of its most important particulars. I need not remind you, Sir, that a very strong sensation in favour of the Roman Catholics was almost universally excited by such an indication of their supposed spirit of conciliation and good-will:—as little is it necessary that I should state, how short-lived was this feeling, how just, and strong, and durable, a reaction was created in the minds of almost every Protestant, when it was found, not only that the Irish Roman Catholic Hierachy disclaimed the declaration of their agent, but also that he himself, a Vicar Apostolic, the most distinguished divine, nay, the most prominent individual of his communion in England, not only retracted all that he had himself said or written in favour of the measure, but also declared before the world, that “he would rather lose the last drop  
“ of his blood, than be instrumental to a Non-  
“ Catholic king obtaining *any power or influence*  
“ over any part of his church.”



Such a practical specimen of the mode of “keeping faith with Heretics,” even in these days, seems, among its other effects, to have decided the tone and spirit of Lord Grenville’s celebrated letter to Lord Fingal, Jan. 22, 1810. In it he thought it necessary to remind his lordship, that “with the extension of civil rights to Roman Catholics must be combined, *if tranquillity and union be the object, other extensive and complicated arrangements; that all due provision must be made for the inviolable maintenance of the religious and civil establishments of this United Kingdom; that a readiness to accede to such arrangements would be the surest indication of those dispositions, on the part of the Roman Catholics, without which all concession must be nugatory, and all conciliation hopeless.*”

The same cause avowedly influenced your own language, when, on May 25, 1810, you, for the first time, thought fit to declare your sentiments on the general question in the House of Commons. “No security, or engagement,” you complain, “is offered on the part of the (Roman) Catholics. Their very advocates are obliged to come forward with censure against them, for withdrawing that security, which, on a former occasion, was proposed to

“ Parliament in their name. The right honour-  
“ able gentleman, (Mr. Grattan,) who brought  
“ forward the motion, has indeed thought it  
“ expedient now to undervalue that former  
“ proposed security—for my own part, *I think*  
“ *that nothing less than the Veto should be accepted*  
“ *by the government. That some such condition is*  
“ *absolutely necessary, no man will doubt, who*  
“ thinks, as I do, that of any adjustment be-  
“ tween the (Roman) Catholics and Protes-  
“ tants, *mutual concession and mutual conciliation*  
“ must be the basis; that such an adjustment,  
“ in order to *produce any of the fruits of tran-*  
“ *quillity, happiness, and prosperity, which are*  
“ *expected from it, must not be a victory to one*  
“ party or the other:—must not be considered  
“ by one side as a successful struggle, nor as a  
“ forced concession to a rival by the other.”

Similar language was, at that time, held by every sober and enlightened advocate of the same cause. The English Roman Catholics themselves, in their petition to Parliament in 1810, distinctly declared, that “any arrange-  
“ ments for the maintenance of the civil and  
“ religious establishments of this kingdom,  
“ founded on the basis of mutual satisfaction  
“ and security, and extending to them the full  
“ enjoyment of the civil constitution of their

“ country, would meet with their grateful concurrence :” and the distinguished Nobleman, whom they selected to present this petition to the House of Lords, was pleased, in presenting it, (Feb. 22, 1810,) to give for himself, the following important pledge : “ That it was only “ on the principle of *mutual satisfaction and security, as stated in the petition*, that the measure would have his support.” “ I beg your “ Lordships,” said he, in a speech printed and circulated by the Roman Catholics, and stated to have been revised by himself, “ I beg your “ Lordships to be assured, that *I never shall “ urge you to grant the relief which is required, “ without having a due regard to your own securities ;* that I shall never urge you to take up “ this subject, but on a comprehensive and general view of *all the interests* connected with “ it. I am sensible, that in looking at the “ claims of the (Roman) Catholics, *we ought “ also to look at those securities which may be demanded for our own religious establishments ;* “ that we ought to strengthen and confirm, and “ consolidate them.”

The same noble Earl, on the 6th of June following, speaking in his place in Parliament, of Lord Grenville’s Letter to the Earl of Fingal, avowed that “ he had been consulted upon it,

“ and he had no hesitation in saying, that there  
“ was not a word, there was not a sentiment,  
“ there was not a principle contained in it,  
“ which had not his unqualified concurrence.”  
He even complained of the *unfairness* of ascribing  
to the friends of the (Roman) Catholics,  
a wish to grant to them all that they asked,  
without requiring such a modification, as might  
be deemed necessary for the safety of the  
established religion; this modification had been  
looked upon as the best, which gave to the  
Crown “ *a negative power to controul the appoint-*  
“ *ment of the Roman Catholic Bishops.*” He  
went further; he gave to the same principle  
the authority of his late illustrious friend. “ Mr.  
“ Fox,” said he, “ was uniformly a warm friend  
“ to the (Roman) Catholic claims; but always  
“ *on the principle of the grant of all those condi-*  
“ *tions, on the part of the (Roman) Catholics,*  
“ which might be deemed necessary to the  
“ safety of the constitution.”

This, Sir, was the epoch of the most secure  
and honoured state of our Protestant establish-  
ments, since the time when they were first  
assailed by the claims of the Roman Catholics.  
No statesman, on either side of either House  
of Parliament, ventured then to recommend  
the unqualified concession of those claims; or

the concession of them at all, without requiring real, effectual, and adequate securities. But from this our high and palmy state, the hopes of the Protestants were soon doomed rapidly to decline. The advocates of concession, though still loud and ardent in their professions of a wish for mutual satisfaction and security, began to adopt a looser phraseology; instead of precise pledges, we now had from most of them, only vague unmeaning generalities; even the tone of just indignation against the treachery or waywardness of the Irish Roman Catholics themselves, began to give way before "candid allowances;" and we soon heard little else but lamentations over "the disappointment of a nation's hopes," with very small consideration of the causes to which that disappointment was mainly to be ascribed. In short, they were, but too apparently, preparing to slide into a totally different line of sentiment and conduct. Still, the beginning of this most inauspicious change was not wholly unaccompanied by cheering and consolatory circumstances. In particular, Sir, we were gratified by hearing from yourself, the following wise and dignified counsel addressed to the House of Commons, on the 24th of April, 1812. "Whenever the



“ legislature shall make up their minds to en-  
“ tertain the question of Catholic concession  
“ seriously, it will be for them to couple the  
“ boon with such restrictions and qualifications,  
“ and to accompany it with such provisions, as  
“ they think necessary for our own security.  
“ Enact what you think right: and then leave  
“ to the Catholics to accept or refuse what they  
“ offer on the conditions which you annex to it.  
“ If they accept, (*which they will,*) the work is  
“ done. If otherwise, you have the consolation  
“ to reflect that you have done your duty by  
“ them. Whatever may be the result, you will  
“ have nothing to reproach to yourselves. Go  
“ as far as you can with safety to the establish-  
“ ments. Do not exact from them terms that  
“ are unnecessary; but *be rigorous in imposing*  
“ *such conditions as shall free you from all real,*  
“ *I had almost said, all imaginary danger.*”

In the following year, an opportunity was afforded to you, of embodying the various provisions, by which this great object was to be obtained.

Let us see what these provisions were. Mr. Grattan, it will be remembered, had introduced a Bill into Parliament, to remove the several  
“ Disqualifications under which his Majesty’s



“ Roman Catholic Subjects now labour,” with certain provisoes; of which the following is, I trust, a correct statement.

1st. It gives the power of sitting in Parliament, and of holding all civil and military offices, (except two, viz. that of Lord Chancellor, &c. of Great Britain, or of Lord Lieutenant, &c. of Ireland,) and of being admitted into, and holding office in, all Lay Corporations, except the Universities, and colleges and schools of royal or ecclesiastical foundation, on the taking of an oath, compounded of and including *all the material clauses* of the oaths now prescribed to be taken by Roman Catholics, by the English Act of 1791, or the Irish Act of 1793, with this important addition—“ And I do solemnly swear, “ that I will not use any privilege, power, or “ influence, which I do now, or may hereafter, “ possess, *to overthrow or disturb the present “ Church Establishments of the United Kingdom;* “ and that I never will, by any conspiracy, contrivance, or device whatsoever, abet others “ in any attempt to overthrow or disturb the “ same; and that I will make known to his “ Majesty, his heirs and successors, all attempts, plots, or conspiracies, whether at “ home or abroad, which shall come to my

“ knowledge, for effecting either of these purposes.”\*

There is also an exception of all ecclesiastical benefices or offices, of the power of presenting to the same, and even of advising the Crown in the presentation thereto, under the penalty of being disabled from holding any office under the Crown.

2d. It proposes to enact, that every Roman Catholic Clergyman shall take the following oath:—“ I, A. B. do swear, that I will never  
“ concur in, or consent to, the appointment or  
“ consecration of any Roman Catholic Bishop,  
“ or Vicar Apostolic, in the United Kingdom,  
“ but such as I shall conscientiously deem to  
“ be of unimpeachable loyalty and peaceable  
“ conduct: and I do swear, that I have not and  
“ will not have any correspondence or communication with the Pope, or See of Rome,  
“ or with any court or tribunal established, or  
“ to be established, by the Pope or See of Rome,  
“ or by the authority of the same, or with any  
“ person, or persons, authorized or pretending

\* This was in lieu of the clause of the Irish oath of 1793,  
“ I will not exercise any privilege, to which I am, or may become, entitled, to disturb and weaken the Protestant Religion  
“ and Protestant Government in this kingdom.”

“ to be authorized by the Pope or See of Rome,  
 “ tending directly or indirectly to overthrow or  
 “ disturb the Protestant Government, or the  
 “ Protestant Church of Great Britain and Ire-  
 “ land, or the Church of Scotland, as by law  
 “ established; and that I will not correspond  
 “ or communicate with the Pope or See of  
 “ Rome, &c. on any matter or thing not purely  
 “ spiritual or ecclesiastical.”

3d. There are provisions under heavy penalties, against any person born out of the United Kingdom, except of British Parents, or any Roman Catholic, who has not been resident five years within the said kingdom, exercising episcopal functions within the same.

To these certainly not unimportant provisions of Mr. Grattan, the following (modified in part, after communication with Lord Castlereagh) were added by yourself.

“ In order to ascertain the loyalty and peace-  
 “ able conduct of Roman Catholic Priests,  
 “ elected or appointed to the exercise of epis-  
 “ copal functions, or to the functions of a dean,  
 “ within the United Kingdom; and in order  
 “ that his Majesty may be fully informed of  
 “ the nature and extent of any intercourse  
 “ between his subjects and a foreign power,”  
 two commissions were to be issued, one for

Great Britain, and the other for Ireland; the former to consist “ of such Roman Catholics “ exercising episcopal functions within Great “ Britain, and such Lay Peers professing the “ Roman Catholic Religion, and such *Lay Commissioners* of the same religious persuasion, (possessed of a thousand pounds a year in land, or £20,000 in personal property,) and such “ Protestant Members of the Privy Council, “ (whereof *one of his Majesty’s principal Secretaries of State* shall be one,) as his Majesty “ shall think fit.” The commission for Ireland was to be similarly constituted, except that instead of a Secretary of State, *the Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant* was to be a member; that five members were necessary to form a Board, one of whom was always to be the Secretary of State in Great Britain, (the Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant in Ireland,) or some other member of the Privy Council, being a Protestant: that one other member of the Board be an ecclesiastical Roman Catholic Commissioner; and one other a lay Roman Catholic commissioner. The president of the commission in Great Britain, to be the Secretary of State; in Ireland, the Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant, or, in the absence of either, the senior commissioner.



“ I.—That from the passing of this Act, no  
 “ Roman Catholic (not at present exercising  
 “ episcopal functions) shall assume the exercise  
 “ of such functions, or the functions of a dean,  
 “ whose name shall not have been previously  
 “ notified to the President of the Board of  
 “ Commissioners, nor *until he shall have received*  
 “ *the notification of his Majesty's approbation*, or  
 “ that of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. That  
 “ the President of the Board, as soon as the  
 “ names shall have been notified to him, shall  
 “ forthwith lay the same before the same Board.  
 “ and that they shall, within six weeks, report  
 “ to his Majesty, or the Lord Lieutenant of  
 “ Ireland, their opinion of the loyalty and  
 “ peaceable conduct of the said persons: upon  
 “ which report the royal approbation or dis-  
 “ approbation shall be signified by instruments  
 “ expressly setting forth, that the same is given  
 “ upon the report, and with the advice of the  
 “ commissioners. Persons presuming to exer-  
 “ cise episcopal functions, or those of dean,  
 “ without such approbation so signified, to be  
 “ adjudged guilty of a misdemeanor, and *liable*  
 “ *to be sent out of the kingdom.*”

“ II.—That persons receiving any Bulls, &c.  
 “ from the See of Rome, &c., shall send the  
 “ same to the President of the Board of Com-

“missioners, who shall lay it before the Board.  
“The Board to inspect, and report to his  
“Majesty,—if innocent, the said Bull to be  
“returned to the party, with an indorsement  
“signed by the Secretary of State (or Secre-  
“tary to the Lord Lieutenant). Provided, that  
“if the instrument relate wholly and exclu-  
“sively to spiritual matters, and such as the  
“person shall conscientiously think that he  
“cannot submit it to lay-inspection, then he  
“shall make oath to that effect; and in such  
“case the commissioners may allow the instru-  
“ment to be sent sealed to be inspected by the  
“senior ecclesiastical commissioner only, and,  
“on his report, the said instrument to be re-  
“turned indorsed by him only. Persons not  
“conforming to these regulations, in lieu of all  
“penalties by existing laws, to be deemed  
“guilty of a misdemeanor, and liable to be  
“sent out of the kingdom.”

Such was your scheme of Securities in 1813, drawn up (as was understood, and said, at the time) with the advice and co-operation of no less distinguished a Roman Catholic, than MR. CHARLES BUTLER,\* of Lincoln's Inn: and no

\* Mr. Butler denies having concerted any clauses with Lord Castlereagh; not so with Mr. Canning, as charged by Dr. Milner. He admits that after a consultation between Mr.



candid person can, I think, examine this production of your political sagacity, aided by his knowledge of the necessary discipline of his Church, without admitting, that it contained much to recommend it to adoption. In submitting it to the consideration of Parliament, you spoke of it with just confidence and honest exultation. You boasted, that you had at length “arranged effectual securities, not only “for Protestant, but also for Catholic freedom.”

The measure, thus amply estimated by your self, received the amplest commendations of all the supporters in Parliament of the Roman Catholic cause, especially of Mr. Grattan and Mr. Plunket. The former declared (May 24th, 1813) that “he thought the clauses, containing “the Securities for the Protestant Establishment, PERFECTLY NECESSARY for the Bill, and “should vote for them as one and the same. “Notwithstanding the opposition of the Catholic clergy to those clauses, (which had

Canning, Lord Castlereagh, &c. at Mr. Ponsonby's house, the draft of the clauses (as then corrected) was sent to him, to procure a fair transcription of them. This was made.—But he does not even intimate, that he showed the slightest disapprobation of the measure, of which he thus became an instrument. See Hist. Mem. iv. 253.

“ began to show itself on these points,) he must  
“ say, that in doing so they were enemies to  
“ themselves, and to the Catholic community,  
“ and they must take upon themselves the con-  
“ sequences.” And Mr. Plunket, who was, I  
believe, for a time, intrusted by the Irish  
Roman Catholics with the guardianship of  
their interests in the lower House, after say-  
ing that “ he had paid the greatest attention  
“ to the clauses just proposed by the Right  
“ Honourable Gentleman (yourself), and he  
“ was happy to say, that the entire of the  
“ clauses as they now stood had his most  
“ cordial approbation. He was rejoiced to see,  
“ that the Right Honourable Gentleman had  
“ succeeded so well in the accomplishment of  
“ the two great objects of the measure, security  
“ to the principles and establishments of the  
“ Protestant, and also to the free exercise of  
“ the opinion of the Catholic, at the same time  
“ that he was admitted to participate in the  
“ benefits of the constitution. It was his opi-  
“ nion, that those objects had been most clearly  
“ and satisfactorily accomplished by the Bill in  
“ its present state,—that such securities had  
“ been proposed as ought to satisfy even the  
“ most jealous of the Protestants, as well as  
“ the most inimical amongst the Catholics.”

After testimonies so flattering, with what feelings of self-gratulation must the author of this applauded measure have contemplated its glad and grateful acceptance by those for whose benefit it was designed! But to do full justice to your feelings, and at the same time, to show the accuracy of your judgment respecting the feelings of the Irish Roman Catholics, I will beg leave to avail myself of your own beautiful, however appropriate, language.

“ To pause now—to retrograde now—to descend from the pinnacle on which we are now placed, and *which commands a view of the affection, the harmony, and the gratitude of our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects*, would be to lose all the ground that we have gained. That ground once lost will not be easily recovered. ‘ There is a tide in the affairs of ‘ men,’ on the height of which *we are now riding towards the accomplishment of our object*. The hands of Protestant and Catholic *are outstretched to meet each other, and nearly touching.*”

“ So having said, awhile he stood, expecting  
 Their universal shout and high applause  
 To fill his ear,—when contrary he hears  
 On all sides, from innumerable tongues,  
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound  
 Of universal scorn.”

Alas! Sir, such was the reception already given to your scheme in Ireland, at the very time when, within the walls of Parliament, you were anticipating the most triumphant result. But the history of this matter so forcibly illustrates the views and tempers of the Irish Roman Catholics, that I must beg leave to state it a little more at large.

On the 26th of May, 1813, before they could have known that the fate of the Bill had been decided in the House of Commons, their Bishops held a general meeting, in which it was unanimously resolved,

“ I.—That having seriously examined the  
“ copy of a Bill now in progress through Par-  
“ liament, we feel ourselves bound to declare,  
“ that the ecclesiastical clauses, or *Securities*  
“ therein contained, are *utterly incompatible* with  
“ the discipline of the Roman Catholic, and  
“ with the free exercise of our religion.”

“ II.—That without incurring the heavy  
“ guilt of *schism*, we cannot accede to such re-  
“ gulations; nor can we dissemble our *dismay*  
“ and *consternation* at the consequences which  
“ such regulations, *if enforced, must necessarily*  
“ produce.”

In February, 1814, a Rescript was addressed to Dr. Poynter, Vicar Apostolic of the London



district, by Monsignor Quarantotti, (since created a cardinal,) who was then invested with all the ecclesiastical and spiritual powers of the See of Rome, except the appointment of bishops. In this rescript, he most distinctly declared, that “having taken the advice of the most learned prelates and divines, and having examined the letters from Dr. Poynter and from Dr. Troy, (Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin,) and the matter having been maturely discussed in a special congregation, it is decreed, that the Catholics *may, with satisfaction and gratitude, accept and embrace the Bill which was last year presented for their emancipation.*”\*

\* “With great pleasure we have learned, that a Bill for the emancipation of the Catholics of your flourishing kingdom from penal laws, which was proposed last year, and lost by a small minority, may probably be again presented in this Session of Parliament.”—“And since it has been represented, that among the bishops certain questions and differences have arisen, relative to the conditions on which the Catholics are to be placed on an equality with their fellow subjects, we, who, in the absence of the supreme Pastor, are placed over the concerns of the sacred missions, and for that purpose are invested with full pontifical powers, have thought it incumbent on us to remove every ambiguity and obstacle which might impede so desirable a conciliation.”—“Having therefore taken the advice of the most learned prelates and divines, having examined the letters, which have been trans-



So much for the alleged incompatibility of your securities with the discipline of the Roman Catholic Church, and with the free exercise of their religion. The highest authority in Rome pronounced the offer to merit not merely acceptance, but gratitude: nor can we seriously doubt, that if no ulterior objects had been in view, such would they have been deemed in Ireland. But this did not accord with the ambitious projects of the Irish prelates; accordingly, in order to defeat the conciliatory tendency of the rescript from Rome, recourse was had to a very different measure, a measure really incompatible with their own discipline, and in direct opposition to one of their own declared principles. They could not themselves fly in the face of the rescript from Rome. Therefore, the *parish priests* of the diocese of Dublin were induced to hold a meeting on the occasion, and to come to the following resolutions.

“1. That we consider the rescript of M.

“mitted to us, both by your Lordship and the Archbishop of  
“Dublin: and the matter having been maturely discussed in  
“a special congregation, it is decreed, that the Catholics may,  
“with satisfaction and gratitude, accept and embrace the Bill  
“which was last year presented for their emancipation, in the  
“form in which your Lordship has laid it before us.”—Butler’s  
Hist. vol. iv. App. p. 520.

“ Quarantotti as not obligatory, particularly as  
“ it wants those authenticative marks whereby  
“ the mandates of the Holy See are known and  
“ recognized; and especially the signature of  
“ the Pope.

“ 2. That we consider the granting to an Anti-  
“ Catholic government any power, direct or in-  
“ direct, with regard to the appointment and  
“ nomination of the Catholic Bishops in Ire-  
“ land, to be at all times inexpedient.

“ 3. That, *circumstanced as we are in this*  
“ *country*, we consider the granting such a  
“ power not only inexpedient, but highly detri-  
“ mental to the best and dearest interests of  
“ religion, and pregnant with incalculable mis-  
“ chief to *the cause of Catholicity in Ireland.*”

Thus were the inferior clergy put forward to give their condemnation of an authoritative decree from Rome, though these very prelates have themselves most solemnly declared, “ that  
“ it is the undoubted and *exclusive* right of Ro-  
“ man Catholic Bishops to discuss all matters  
“ appertaining to the doctrines and discipline  
“ of the Roman Catholic Church.”\*

But the matter must not be thus dismissed. The terms in which the last resolution of the

\* Resolutions of Irish Roman Catholic Bishops assembled in Dublin, Feb. 24, 1810.

Dublin clergy is expressed, are big with the most important meaning. “Circumstanced as “we are in *Ireland*, we consider the granting “such a power highly detrimental to the best “interests of religion.” Why in Ireland more than in other countries? Why, there, should they object to give to their sovereign a security, which every other government in Europe insists on possessing? Is it, that it is incompatible with the discipline of their Church? That, as we have seen, could no longer be pretended. What, then, is the true reason? The last words of the resolution explain the whole. It is “THE CAUSE OF CATHOLICITY IN IRELAND;” in plain English, it is the hope of seeing their Church exalted in triumph on the ruins of the Protestant Church, which instigates them to the barefaced disregard not only of the wishes of their parliamentary friends, but also of the mandates from Rome and the practice of every state in Christendom.

But even this was not all. The priests, from their altars, addressed their congregations against the papal rescript. They exhorted their flocks to be patient, to remain tranquil under so severe a visitation: but *to be prepared, if necessary, to sacrifice their lives* rather than surrender the freedom of their Church to prelate

or pope. The exhortations were heard with deep emotions of indignation; and it was easy to see that the resistance will be universal.\*

I request you, Sir, to couple this intimation with the language of the Irish prelates in their resolution of May 26, 1813.—“Nor can we “dissemble our *dismay* and *consternation* at the “consequences which such regulations,” (your projected securities,) “if enforced, must *neces-* “*sarily* produce,” and then to say, on your own recorded principles, what was the course which it became yourself, and the other advocates of concession, to pursue? You could not blind yourselves to the glaring fact, that if Parliament had passed your Bill into a law, (a Bill, according to your own statement of it, as full of liberal indulgence as was consistent with a decent regard to the safety of our Protestant institutions,) instead of tranquillizing and conciliating Ireland, it would have been the signal for deeper and more rancorous hostility. Let it not be said, that it was the refusal of Parliament to pass this Bill, which excited so much violence; on the contrary, that very re-

\* Dublin Evening Post, Tuesday, May 10, 1814, as cited in “Dangers with which Great Britain and Ireland are now menaced,” a very valuable pamphlet, from which I have not scrupled to borrow much of the statement of this matter.



fusal was caused in part by the early declared opposition of the Roman Catholics to its provisions. No, Sir, it was the dread that in another session the meagre majority which had defeated your attempt might no longer be able to prevail,—that concession would come to them burthened with conditions, which would make their ulterior objects less attainable: this it was which arrayed against you all the Roman Catholic population of Ireland. What then, I repeat, was the conduct, not only which you might have been expected to pursue, but which you had yourself, but a few short months before, publicly prescribed to others? You had “coupled the proposed concession with such restrictions and qualifications as you had thought “necessary,” and with such only:—“if the “Roman Catholics should refuse,” (and they had declared in the strongest manner that they would refuse,) “you had done your duty by “them. You had gone as far as you could “with safety to the establishments. You had “not exacted from them terms that were un- “necessary;” it remained, therefore, if you had any regard for the pledge you had given, and for the consistency of your public character, that you should “be rigorous in insisting on “those conditions which you had imposed.”—



Nay, this was not left to be deduced by inference from your former language. In speaking in favour of this very Bill,\* you expressly declared, that “if the boon proffered by Parliament should be contumaciously refused, *you were firmly determined to take your stand against the Catholics*, the same as if you had never stood forward their advocate.”

How, Sir, did you redeem this pledge? Let the history of the last fourteen years answer the question. I will not pursue the detail through all the miserable gradation of big professions and small performances, growing every year still smaller, till at last you brought yourself not only to give your support to that insult on the common sense of the country, the Bill of 1825, but actually to declare, that in your judgment no better securities could be devised.

It is true, unhappily too true, that your's has been very far from a solitary instance. All, or almost all, the distinguished men,† who set out

\* May 11, 1813.

† I may be permitted to make an exception of one very distinguished name, I mean the late Lord Londonderry. His language and conduct on this question, even to the hour of his death, were uniformly in favour of concession to the Roman Catholics, but on the indispensable condition of real and effective securities. Mr. Canning bore the amplest testimony to the manly, yet conciliatory, tone, in which his Lordship stated his

with supporting the claims of the Roman Catholics on the professed principle of requiring adequate securities for our Protestant establishments, have by degrees sidled off into the same devious track. One among them, whose wise and dignified language I have before been proud to cite, even that earliest advocate of their cause, who once required as the indispensable condition of his powerful support, that they should exhibit “those dispositions, without  
“which all concession must be nugatory, and  
“all conciliation hopeless,”—he who declared in a public letter, composed with all the deliberation, and guarded with all the caution of the most rigid diplomacy, that “with the extension of civil rights to Roman Catholics  
“must be combined, *if tranquillity and union be*  
“*the object*, other extensive and complicated  
“arrangements,—that all due provision must  
“be made for the inviolable maintenance of the  
“religious and civil establishments of this

objections to Mr. C.’s clauses in the Bill of 1813, as first proposed, and to his hearty and honourable co-operation in correcting them. Among the many reasons, which made his death a national misfortune, perhaps there is none more important, than the loss of his sound practical good sense to restrain the extravagancies of the more incautious advocates of the Roman Catholic cause.

“ United Kingdom ;”—even he was at length heard openly to abandon the demand of all securities whatsoever.

He took this step, and was followed in it by others, even while the tone and temper of the Roman Catholics were daily becoming more violent,—their hostility to our establishments more undisguised,—their hopes of carrying their object by force more sanguine,—their threats more loud and daring,—their whole conduct more and more glaringly evincing the blind and reckless fury of the most envenomed hatred.

It should seem, that, in the judgment of some of our statesmen, a very peculiar principle of political calculation applies to this subject, by which the necessity of precaution is found to be in an inverse ratio to the magnitude of the danger. Not many years ago, a meek and imploring suitor was not to be admitted into the outer court of the temple, without first demanding from him ample securities for his good abearing;—but, now, every barrier may be safely broken down,—nay, every obstruction and inconvenience must be carefully swept away, in order that the armed ruffian, with defiance on his front, and menace on his tongue,

may find a free and unencumbered passage to the very sanctuary of our laws and our religion.

Still there is something respectable in this daring defiance of all the claims of consistency, this bold contradiction to former opinions, however deliberately adopted, however repeatedly and solemnly recorded,\*—when compared with

\* March 8th, 1810, Lord Grenville rose to present a petition on behalf of the Roman Catholics of the county and city of Waterford. “His Lordship wished to take the present opportunity of restating his opinions upon this important subject. “Indeed, it could scarcely now be necessary for him to restate “them to their Lordships. He had for some time back adopted “the most public mode of declaring and disseminating them, “(by his letter to Lord Fingal,) and he had now only to say, “that *whatever circumstances had since intertened, he not only “had not altered those opinions, but that they had been strengthened “and confirmed. He had maturely weighed those opinions. “They had not been lightly taken up. Much less had he since “made any attempt to change their character and complexion, “with the view to square them to any new doctrine, or to suit “them to any new purpose. In the sentiments he had invariably “expressed on this most important subject, he should most steadily “persevere.” Since this declaration was made, the Pope has been released from the thralldom of Buonaparte; but this single alteration of circumstances will not account for so complete a change of views and conduct in the Noble Lord, and in those who have followed in his train. It was not the danger from foreign influence merely, which was the ground of his former opinions,—but the necessity of consulting for*



the illusory and shifty course pursued by others; by those who, affecting to be faithful to their ancient principles, have surrendered them all, one after another, at the dictation of men, who repay their subservience only with ill-dissembled ridicule. Mr. O'Connell was not long ago advised to follow moderate measures. I forget the exact words of his answer; but, in substance, he told his adviser that it was by violence alone, that the Roman Catholics of Ireland have advanced their cause to its present prosperous state. "Remember," said he, "the conditions which were once required of us even by our present friends, and contrast with them the terms which we can now command. Was it our peaceable demeanour, our decorous language, which placed us on this vantage ground? No! it was the boldness with which we asserted our claims, the unflinching, uncompromising tone of all our measures, that has enabled us thus to look back with triumph, and forward with confidence. If, indeed, any thing could have been gained by following the course which you

"mutual conciliation," for "allaying jealousies," for "tranquillity and union," above all, for "the inviolable maintenance of the religious and civil establishments of this United Kingdom."



“gentle counsellors recommend, we might have  
“been ready to play the pliant part, and listen  
“to the men to whom we now dictate.”

Sir, I remember an old common-room story, which seems so aptly to illustrate the course you have thought fit to pursue towards these Irish agitators, that I will crave your patience, while I tell it to you here.

A celebrated wit, the best scholar of his day both at Eton and at Oxford,—a first-rate speaker, too, in Parliament, whose only fault was a little over-anxiety, in season and out of season, to get the laughers on his side,—happened one day, in driving along a narrow road, to meet a heavy-loaded waggon. What was to be done? he wished to be accommodating, but for both to proceed was impossible: asserting, therefore, the privilege of his aristocratic vehicle, he peremptorily ordered the farmer to get off the road. “Off the road! “not for thee, nor any man in England;— “and if thou dost not take that gimcrack of “thine out of my way directly, I’ll do—what “I should be very sorry to be obliged to do.” Our hero, though by no means deficient in manhood, yet wisely considering that no honour could be gained in such an encounter, soon determined to take the discreeter part. There-

fore settling the matter of dignity as he could, with the best grace possible, and with admirable management of his reins, he contrived to back out of the difficulty, and at length lodged himself and his curricule on a piece of smooth turf, at a considerable distance in the rear. “And now, my friend,” said he, “since I have done this purely for your accommodation, be so good as to tell me what you meant by saying, that if I did not get out of your way, you’d do what you would be very sorry to be obliged to do?” “Why, please your honour,” says the honest Yorkshireman, pulling off his hat, and making his lowest reverence, “If you had not backed, *I must.*”

Such is the ludicrous condition, to which you have reduced yourself: but, unhappily, there is something in it worse than ludicrous. Sir, you must know better than I can presume to judge, what was due to your own dignity, I had almost said, to your own honour. But as one of your warm admirers, as one who was persuaded by your powerful and manly eloquence in 1813, almost to wish that your labours might ultimately succeed, I felt no slight pain in witnessing so strange, so unaccountable a fall,—in seeing you submit to the insolent domination of those demagogues,—in

seeing you look on with patience, while they “plucked out the heart” of your own enterprise,—in seeing you complete the career of defection and apostasy, by standing forwards as the leading advocate of the Bill of 1825. That Bill I have already presumed to call an insult on the common sense of the country,—and I am well aware that I have no right to say this of a measure which had the sanction of yourself and a majority of the late House of Commons, without being ready to prove the charge. I proceed, therefore, to examine its provisions; and you, Sir, at least, will have no reason to complain, if I make your Bill of 1813 the principal standard of comparison.

### *Bill of 1825.*

The concessions made in the last Bill are so entirely, or so nearly, the same with those before proposed, that I do not think it necessary to remark upon them—they extend to the admission of the Roman Catholics to an equality of legislative, judicial, and executive powers, excepting the offices of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and of Lord Chancellor both of England and Ireland.

The Securities, with which these concessions were to be accompanied, are the only subject worthy of inquiry. They consist of a new

Oath, and of two Royal Commissions, charged with certain duties, touching, first, the appointment of Roman Catholic Bishops and Deans ;—and, secondly, the reception of Bulls and other instruments from Rome.

I will examine these in their order. And first of the *Oath*.—It contains nothing which has not been already prescribed by the Irish Act of the 13th and 14th of George III., or by that of the 33d of the same king. So far, therefore, we gain nothing. I beg pardon ; we gain the exchange of *and* for *or* in two of its clauses. First,—as the law now stands, the Irish Roman Catholic “renounces, rejects, and abjures “the opinion, that princes excommunicated, “may be deposed *and* murdered ;” your new Security-Oath would have made him renounce, &c. the opinion, that princes excommunicated, “may be deposed *or* murdered ;” and for the microscopic vigilance, which enabled you and your fellow-labourers in this good cause to suggest such an amendment in the existing law, I trust you will receive your due meed of praise. The matter is really more important than the Protestant reader may at first suspect : for the persons, whose loyalty requires to be secured by these provisions, are prodigiously nice and accurate, in estimating the

exact quantum of obligation which they undertake. "Is it so nominated in the bond?" is their constant inquiry. If not,

"be't but so much,  
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,  
On the division of one twentieth part  
Of one poor scruple,"

they will have nothing to do with it:—as the following very instructive instance may demonstrate.

The last clause of the Oath of 1793 runs in these words,—“I solemnly swear that I will  
“not exercise any privilege to which I am, or  
“may become, entitled, to disturb and weaken  
“the Protestant Religion and Protestant Government in this kingdom.” The Act, prescribing this oath, was printed in Dublin (Coglan, 1793) for the use of Roman Catholics, with *notes*;—whether it be that Acts of Parliament of this nature, like the Scriptures, must not be circulated among the faithful without the aid of orthodox comments to secure their being understood in the sense of the Church, I know not. But so it was; and the following is the note wherewith on this occasion the Faithful are edified, and we Heretics, if we are not wilfully blind, may be enlightened.



“ *All here* are agreed, that to violate the  
 “ above clause, it is necessary to disturb *and*  
 “ weaken, not only the Protestant Religion, but  
 “ *likewise* the Protestant Government. They  
 “ are connected by the conjunction *and*, with-  
 “ out any comma after Religion.” (In Ireland,  
 it seems, contrary to the rule of construction  
 which prevails on this side of the Channel,  
 punctuation is deemed an important particular  
 in interpreting a statute.) “ Both must be dis-  
 “ turbed *and* weakened, not in *any* manner, but  
 “ precisely *by the exercise of the privileges now*  
 “ *granted*. In other respects, *we are in our*  
 “ *former situation* as to preaching, teaching,  
 “ writing, &c. ‘Weaken,’ after ‘disturb,’ ap-  
 “ pears rather an expletive than a word con-  
 “ veying a distinct meaning, for it is implied  
 “ in ‘disturb,’ as whoever intends to disturb,  
 “ *à fortiori*, intends to weaken: hence the ex-  
 “ pression is generally understood, and so it  
 “ has been explained by every one consulted  
 “ on it—‘to weaken by disturbance:’ indeed,  
 “ if *or* was between *disturb* and the word *weaken*,  
 “ AS IT WAS PROPOSED TO BE, *the signification*  
 “ *would be changed and inadmissible.*”\* Admi-

\* See Note to Sir J. C. Hippesley’s Speech, Cobbett’s De-  
 bates, May 11, 1813.

rable casuists! It should seem, therefore, that the framers of the new oath, quite aware of the punctilious attention paid by these religionists to the meaning of particles, were so good as to give his Majesty the full benefit of the disjunctive *or*, in the deposing clause. And the other high contracting party were graciously pleased to assent to the alteration. To say the truth, the concession would not have gone quite so far, as it may have been at first supposed; for although either to depose *or* murder would be forbidden by the new oath, yet very little ingenuity is requisite to discover, that a Heretic and excommunicate king may be *killed* without being murdered. I am aware, Sir, that there is a modern authority for the assertion, that the Council of Constance has expressly declared, “that the king-killing doctrine, or murder of “princes excommunicated for Heresy, is impious and execrable, being contrary to the “laws of God and nature.”\*

But this, I am sorry to say, is only one of the many instances, in which those, who, like myself, have the misfortune to be employed in hunting these Jesuits through their various

\* Gother's “Catholic Principles,” republished by Dr. Copinger, cited in Sir J. C. Hippesley's Speech, May 18, 1810. Cobbett's Debates.

windings, are taught the absolute impossibility of taking any thing whatever on their bare assertion. Sir, the decree of the Council of Constance, not only does not say, what Gother and Dr. Coppinger are pleased to say for it, but its real words *imply* the very contrary. They are as follows:—"The following article is condemned:\* 'Every tyrant may and ought ' lawfully and meritoriously to be put to ' death by any vassal or subject of his, even ' by clandestine artifice, &c. notwithstanding ' any oath taken to him, or compact made ' with him, *without waiting for the sentence or ' command of any judge whatever.*'" Hereby implying, that princes have judges who can pronounce sentence upon them, and can command that they be cut off.

Let us add the canon of Urban II.† which says, "We do not consider those as homicides, who burning with zeal for the Catholic Church against excommunicated persons, happen to have killed any of them," and in consequence requires that but a moderate penance be laid on such persons,—a canon which still has its place in the ecclesiastical code, and is part of the canon

\* Con. Const. Sess. xv.

† 47 Ca. 23. Qu. vi. Excommunicatorum.

law of the Church of Rome. It follows, that if the party who takes this oath, be content to *kill* an excommunicated king, from the impulse of *religious zeal*, without previously deposing him, as such "killing" is no "murder," he certainly would not violate the oath.

But I repeat, I am eager to give all due praise, whatever it be, to the caution which has obtained for us even this one point. The proposed security-oath abjures the opinion, that an excommunicated king may be deposed *or* murdered; not, as it stood before, deposed *and* murdered! You were also so good, as to make a similar amendment in one particular of the other clause, which has been cited above. "I will not use any privilege, &c. to disturb the Protestant Religion *or* Protestant Government," is the form in which it stands in your oath. As for disturbing *and* *weakening* them, your friends at Dublin having declared, that the change of *and* into *or* is there *inadmissible*, you very prudently omit the phrase altogether.

We have now seen *all the new security* you have given us in the oath. It consists of twice changing *and* into *or*! Let us next look to the opposite side of the account, where we find the following items standing against you.

The clause "I do swear, that I will defend



“ to the utmost of my power, the settlement  
“ and arrangement of property within this  
“ realm, as established by the laws,” is OMIT-  
TED; and yet it appears in evidence before the  
Committee of the House of Commons,—it is  
indeed a matter of universal notoriety,—that the  
descendants of the former owners of forfeited  
property in Ireland, extending to almost the  
whole land, still keep alive the memory of their  
claims, and are ready eagerly to avail them-  
selves of any convulsion which could give a  
hope of asserting them with success!\*

Again, the clause “ I do declare solemnly  
“ before God, that I believe that no act, in it-  
“ self unjust or immoral, can ever be justified  
“ or excused, by or under the pretence, or  
“ colour, that it was done, either for the good  
“ of the Church, or in obedience to any eccle-  
“ siastical power whatsoever,” as also, “ that it  
“ is not an article of the Catholic faith, neither  
“ am I thereby required to believe, that I am  
“ bound to obey any order in its own nature  
“ immoral, though the Pope, or any ecclesias-  
“ tical power, should issue or direct such order;  
“ but on the contrary I hold, that it would be  
“ sinful in me to pay any respect or obedience

\* See Col. Irwin before Comm. 696-8.



“ thereto ;” ALL THIS IS OMITTED, and yet the history of the three last centuries proclaims to every one who thinks of history at all as something better than “ an old almanack,” that the mandates of nuncios, bishops, and priests, in defiance of the laws of God and man, have repeatedly led the people of that unhappy land to every deed of violence, which men can commit.

At this very day, it is notorious, that the Bull Unigenitus is received, and is in force in Ireland, and that one of the propositions *condemned* by that Bull is as follows :—“ That the fear of “ an unjust excommunication, ought not to “ deter us from doing our duty.” Dr. Murray has indeed endeavoured, in his evidence,\* to explain away this most astounding fact. He says, that “ the proposition was condemned in “ the precise meaning of the individual (Quesnel) out of whose book it was extracted : “ which meaning was, that he was not to be “ deterred from *supporting* certain *condemned* “ errors by the dread of an excommunication, “ for that an unjust excommunication should “ not deter a man from doing his duty, that is, “ from doing that particular duty, a thing

\* P. 647. Commons.

“ which really was not a duty but a crime.” Dr. Murray must have sadly forgotten himself, when he hazarded such an assertion before the Committee. He will, on recollection, I doubt not, be ready to retract it, and to acknowledge that Quesnel, as well as the Jansenists in general, not only did not support the condemned errors, but actually admitted that they were heretical! Their offence was of a very different kind; namely, that while they condemned the erroneous propositions, they denied that those propositions were contained in the books out of which the Pope had professedly extracted them. In short, they did not subscribe to the Pope’s infallibility in matters not of faith (that they admitted) but of *dogmatic fact*. The Pope issued a Bull enjoining them, on pain of excommunication, to admit his infallibility in this latter sense. Quesnel thought it his duty to decline making this admission, and said that “ the fear of an unjust excommunication ought “ not to deter us from doing our duty.” Thus, then, it was that the Pope condemned, and so do the Roman Catholics of Ireland (for they have admitted his Bull) *condemn*, the proposition, that the dread of excommunication ought not to deter the members of their church from

doing what they conceive to be their duty\*—the duty, in the instance proposed, of refusing to affirm what the party did not believe to be true, even on a point never before decided by the Church, and resting solely on a Bull of the Pope. But how on this principle can we be assured, that the Roman Catholics of Ireland will not, on all occasions, yield to the terrors

\* It is curious and edifying to see how the Class Book of Maynooth deals with this extraordinary censure in the Bull Unigenitus; and it has too intimate a connection with the principles of the Roman Catholics to be foreign to our present purpose. “Of unjust excommunications,” it says, “some are *evidently* unjust, others not so; and not all unjust excommunications are null and void.” Again, “there are various kinds of duties, some necessary and immutable, others liable to change; we must distinguish too, between duties evidently immutable, and those which are falsely, or rashly, or doubtfully esteemed such. Now as the proposition of Quesnel, ‘*Excommunicationis injustæ metus non debet nos impedire ab implendo nostro officio*,’ is indefinite, negative, and in a matter of doctrine, it is, by the rules of logic, equivalent to an universal, and therefore must be understood of every unjust excommunication whatever, and every duty whatever. But so considered, the proposition is false, scandalous, injurious to the Church and to its practice. For it is a common maxim of law, that ‘a sentence of excommunication, even evidently unjust, if it be not null, ought to be feared and observed.’ Therefore the faithful ought to be hindered by it from performing a duty which is not immutable, or capable of relaxation.”—De Pœn. p. 412.

of excommunication, in spite of their own private conceptions of their duty? The appeal to history, I repeat, affords a fearful confirmation of the reasonableness of the apprehension. And it has received a most instructive illustration from the events even of the last few months.

Would that this were all! But it is stated in evidence,\* that it is at this hour taught at Maynooth,—the very passage from the Class-Book is adduced,—that “such is the sacredness of  
“the obligation to obey the Church, that, even  
“*at the day of judgment*, the sinner, who has  
“erred by following its commands, may thus  
“address his Heavenly Judge, and *claim forgiveness as of right*. ‘Lord, if it be an error  
“which we have followed, *Thou Thyself hast*  
“*deceived us* by thine own plain and reiterated  
“direction, that we should hear the Church,  
“even as we hear Thee. *Thou Thyself hast*  
“*deceived us* by thy apostles, by the pastors and  
“teachers appointed by Thee “for the perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying of thy  
“Body”—who have commanded us so to do.  
“*Thou Thyself hast deceived us* by thy Church,  
“called by St. Paul “the Pillar and ground of  
“the Truth,” which Church has never ceased

\* Lords, p. 682.



“ to exact from her children a firm assent to all  
 “ her decrees, *threatening an everlasting curse*  
 “ *against those who dare to rebel against her.*  
 “ Conscious, alas! of our own ignorance in  
 “ divine things, and of the weakness of man’s  
 “ understanding, how could we rely on our-  
 “ selves in searching the Scriptures, and despise  
 “ an authority so exalted? *Confidently, there-*  
 “ *fore, we say, O Lord, if it be an error which we*  
 “ *have followed, THOU THYSELF HAST DECEIVED*  
 “ *US AND WE ARE EXCUSED.’ ”*

I assure you, Sir, it is some relief to a mind  
 of ordinary piety, to turn from blasphemy so  
 revolting, even to the details of your Security-  
 Oath. I must next, therefore, apprise my  
 readers that the following clause of the old oath,  
 “ I also declare that it is not an article of the  
 “ Catholic Faith, neither am I required to believe  
 “ or profess, that *the Pope is infallible,*” is OMITTED.  
 The old oath itself is so far deficient on this  
 point, that it does not require the party to dis-  
 claim for himself the belief of the Pope’s infalli-  
 bility; and yet, if he believe that article, what  
 security can he give for his allegiance to any  
 Protestant Government? If the Pope is infal-  
 lible, then was the Massacre on St. Bartholo-  
 mew’s Day a righteous and a holy deed; for  
 Gregory XIII. not only went in solemn proces-



sion to the church of St. Louis, to return thanks to God for it, but also he sent plenary indulgences in abundance to the king and people of France, in reward of their exemplary zeal. If the Pope is infallible, then is the king-killing doctrine of the Jesuit Saurez true; for Paul IV. sanctioned it with his express approbation. But why should I go back to former centuries? If the Pope is infallible, then must his deposing power (in spite of Dr. Doyle's sworn testimony that it is quite obsolete) be still admitted, for Pius VII., in our own days, recognized it in his Bull of excommunication against his once beloved son Buonaparte;—and the possession of ecclesiastical lands or goods by heretics, is sacrilegious and impious; for so the same Pope maintained by his Nuncio at the Diet of Ratisbon in 1803. And yet, Sir, with all these, and all the other obvious consequences of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility staring you in the face, not only you and the Committee were pleased to suffer Dr. Doyle to evade stating his own opinion\* on this point, and to send you for

\* What may be Dr. Doyle's opinion on this point is not, perhaps, of very great moment. But it is worth remarking to those who ascribe importance to the opinions of Universities, that the University at which he was educated, that of Coimbra, gave its formal opinion in 1717 in favour of the infallibility of

further information to a scarce work of an old Bishop of the Canaries (who, by the way, expressly affirms it), but also you strike out all reference to it in your oath, and so would permit even those, who hold it as a matter of divine faith, to bear part in the government of this Protestant land.

It would be tedious to pursue my observations on all the omissions of this precious oath:—I shall content myself therefore, with merely mentioning, that the clause, which disclaims belief in the efficacy of the Absolution of Sins at the mere will of the priest, is also omitted.

But there remains a particular, on which I must detain you with a few remarks. The last clause of the proposed oath is as follows: “And  
“ I do solemnly swear, that I will never exer-  
“ cise any privileges to which I am, or may  
“ become entitled, to disturb the Protestant  
“ Religion or Protestant Government, in this  
“ kingdom.” “*To disturb the Protestant Reli-*  
“*gion*” is perhaps, in itself, one of the most

the Pope. “Our University,” so it writes by its Rector to Clement XI., knows, that *by the mouth of the Sovereign Pastor, ‘it is God himself who speaks to the Flock, over which the  
“ Holy Ghost has constituted him the Universal Bishop, to  
“ govern the Church of God.’*—Hist. des Papes, t. v. p. 476. (par Fr. Bruys.)

vague and unmeaning phrases, that could have been devised. It admits of evasion and equivocation without end. I will notice only one instance, the obvious and important distinction,—one actually taken by Dr. Doyle,—between the Protestant *Religion*, and the Protestant *Established Church*. That very single-minded and ingenuous divine, under the signature of I. K. L., has instructed his readers, that to strip the Established Church in Ireland of what he conceives its ill-gotten and ill-employed possessions, would rather strengthen than impair the Protestant Religion! of course, therefore, to endeavour to accomplish this end, would be not at all inconsistent with the oath. It is true, that, according to the clause immediately preceding, they must not intend “to subvert the  
“ present Church Establishment, for the purpose of substituting a Roman Catholic Establishment in its stead:”—but this is all; if they keep clear of the latter purpose, they may intend and labour to the utmost,—indeed, they seem invited to do so,—for the subversion of the Established Church. On this account, you, Sir, in your better days, or Mr. Grattan, introduced into the Bill of 1813, the following very important improvement of this part of the present oath. “I do solemnly swear, that I

“ will not use any privilege, power, or influence,  
“ which I do now, or may hereafter possess, to  
“ overthrow or disturb the *present Church*  
“ *Establishments* of the United Kingdom; and  
“ that I never will, by any conspiracy, con-  
“ trivance, or device whatsoever, abet others in  
“ any attempt to overthrow or disturb the same;  
“ and that I will make known to His Majesty,  
“ &c. all attempts, plots, or conspiracies, whe-  
“ ther at home or abroad, which shall come to  
“ my knowledge, for effecting either of these  
“ purposes.”

A similar caution was observed in that part of Mr. Plunkett's Bill of 1821, which prescribed the oath to be taken by the Roman Catholic Clergy;—they were to swear, that they would have “no correspondence or communication  
“ with Rome for the purpose of directly or indi-  
“ rectly disturbing the Protestant Government,  
“ or the *Protestant Established Church of Great*  
“ *Britain and Ireland.*” Why, Sir, were these valuable precedents abandoned on this last occasion? Why was it, that you reverted to the old, and avowedly defective, phraseology of the existing oath?—Why, but because the whole proceeding was regulated according to the views and wishes of the Roman Catholics themselves,—of the very persons, against whose



apprehended hostility new checks and safeguards were to be devised. Mr. O'Connell wrote to his Dublin friends, that such was the liberal wish for conciliation in England, that he himself was employed to draw the Bill! and though the dignity of our senators took fire at the intimation, the internal evidence proves most conclusively, either that Mr. O'Connell said what was literally correct, or at least that he was allowed "an effectual negative" on your deliberations. I suspect, that Dr. Doyle was also of the party; for the interests of his order were too amply and warily provided for, to have been altogether the work of laymen however liberal. In short, nothing seems to have been insisted upon, which the Roman Catholics could find any difficulty in yielding; if any objection, on their part, arose, the point itself was abandoned; and this whole process of arranging the terms of the oath, was no better, than allowing you to march out with the honours of war, and sparing you the shame of a surrender at discretion.

So much for Security the first,—and the *chief*,—the New Oath. It leaves out almost all the most important articles of the oath already prescribed by law;—but it presents us with the



grand improvement of twice exchanging *and*  
for *or* !

Let us pass to Security the second. The Bill proceeds to declare, that “ regulations touching the appointment of bishops and deans of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland are deemed necessary :” and truly when the portentous powers possessed, and exercised, by these functionaries, in the present state of that unhappy country, are borne in mind,—still more, when it is recollected who, and of what character, are some of the personages who now fill the station of bishops there,—that one of them, under the signature of I. K. L., is by far the most daring and seditious libeller of the day,—that another scruples not (if the public papers do not belie him) to address an assembly of thousands of the most ignorant of his countrymen in terms hardly short of excitement to immediate insurrection,\*—it will readily be con-

\* Dublin, Sept. 11, 1826. “ A baronial meeting was held a few days since, under the ruins of the ancient Abbey of Murisk, in the County of Mayo. At this meeting *several thousand persons* attended. The meeting was addressed by “ the Rev. Dr. Kelly, a Roman Catholic Bishop.” Among other things, “ *Look around,*” said he, “ *and behold those venerable ruins under which we are assembled—such is the disgraceful*

ceded, that “ regulations touching the appointment of them ” are indeed “ *necessary*.” It was, therefore, with pleasure we saw in your Bill of 1813, a Board provided, consisting, in addition to some of these ecclesiastics themselves, of certain of the leading laymen of their communion, and, at the head of all, a Protestant of high rank and consideration, no less than one of His Majesty’s Secretaries of State in England, or the Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant in Ireland; these were to report on the fitness of the candidates proposed, and on their report His Majesty was to signify his approbation or disapprobation of the appointment. But a Board so constituted—much more possessed

“ *and oppressive system of the penal laws, that if I had means of*  
“ *throwing a roof over this building, that you might congregate*  
“ *here for the worship of God, that act would be illegal, although*  
“ *this church was built by the pious offerings of your ancestors.*  
“ On every side to which we turn there are pains and penalties  
“ for the persecuted Catholic. Is he not compelled to break  
“ through the ordinances of his church, or be dismissed from  
“ his employment? Must he not work at factories not far from  
“ where we now stand, on days on which he should worship  
“ his God, or be turned out of employment, and stigmatized by  
“ the name of Papist? *My friends, those things are quite fami-*  
“ *liar to us; if any other nation suffered as we have suffered—*  
“ *if our English friends were to endure such oppression, do you not*  
“ *imagine that they would be long since removed?* ”

of such authority—was not to the taste of your present masters,—and, therefore, as a matter of course, it was abandoned;—and our Sovereign was not to be permitted to exercise any power whatever, no, nor to possess the smallest influence, over this Irish hierarchy, though it is notorious, that the schismatical Emperor of Russia and the heretical King of Prussia exercise, in the appointment of the Roman Catholic bishops of their dominions, a power far exceeding the utmost ever proposed to be given to His Majesty, and have each of them an accredited agent at Rome, chiefly for the exercise of it. Our King himself has an absolute negative (with the consent of Rome) on the appointment of bishops of that communion in Canada; and the bishop of Quebec is not allowed so much as to choose his coadjutor, until the latter has been approved by the civil governor.\* So plain indeed is the right, and so obvious the necessity of asserting it, that the late Pope, on being informed of the unwillingness of the bishops of his church in Ireland to concede the power which he had expressly given, actually addressed to them, on the 1st of February, 1816, a long

\* Dr. Milner's Letter to a Parish Priest, Aug. 1808, quoted by Sir J. C. Hippley in his Speech, May 18, 1810.

letter of remonstrance and reproof. After demonstrating the propriety, justice, and expedience of the regulation, he thus concludes: “ Such being the state of this momentous question, what hope could there be entertained, that *the British government would long have submitted to an exclusion from a share in appointing the bishops of your island*, while a conduct so different is observed not only to Catholic sovereigns, to those even whose dominions are of the smallest extent, but also to princes who do not belong to our communion?” “ We, therefore, venerable brothers, entertain no doubt, that you all, having considered, and duly weighed, what we have thus set before you, will acknowledge the measure adopted by us to be *most just*, and will in all respects conform yourselves to it.”

Such was the language of Pius VII. himself on this subject. But even the mandates from Rome are deemed by your Irish friends unworthy of their attention, when they coincide with the claims of duty to their temporal sovereign. Accordingly, in this Bill of their's and your's, the right, so freely given to every other

\* See the whole Letter in the App. to Butler's Memoirs of English Catholics, vol. iv. p. 536.



government in Europe, is absolutely refused to our own.

But a Board of Commissioners was to be created: this would, at any rate, sound well.— And what was to be their business? They were “to *certify* to his Majesty the appointment of any bishop or dean, to be hereafter appointed in the said Roman Catholic Church in Ireland!” Why, this, instead of a security, is nothing else but a new and very important concession: it is in plain English, to give them, what the law to this hour withholds, the public and formal recognition of their rank and character of bishops.—It may, however, be said that the certificate was to conclude in these words—“And we do believe the said A. B. to be *a loyal subject* of his Majesty.” True: but the persons so certifying are not those who make the appointment, or necessarily know any thing of the person appointed. They are bound to “believe him,” as they are bound to believe every one, “to be a loyal subject,” unless he has given to them actual indications of his disloyalty. Does then such an attestation afford to the state the slightest security worth demanding, in a case where the very foundation of the demand is a just and reasonable jealousy of the dispositions of persons ap-



pointed to stations of great and extensive influence?

The oath prescribed by the Bill of 1813 forbade any ecclesiastic from “*concurring in or consenting to the appointment* or consecration of any Roman Catholic bishop or dean, whom he did not conscientiously believe to be of unimpeachable loyalty and peaceable conduct.” Mr. Plunket’s Bill of 1821 gave a similar, though somewhat weaker, assurance. Why, then, in this instance also, was the wholesome strictness of the precedents before you wilfully and studiously abandoned?

But of whom was the Board to consist? *Solely* of the Roman Catholic bishops themselves. Such men, as those, to whose proceedings I have just now adverted, are to vouch for the loyalty of their future colleagues! Sir, I will not abuse the patience of my readers, by commenting on such a provision. I will only intreat you to follow up your own principle, and recommend to your brother Secretary of State, Mr. Peel, that in his amendment of the criminal law, he give us the benefit of this new Security for our lives and properties, and provide, that in future every person charged with felony shall be tried by a jury taken out of Newgate.

One other Security remains. To the same Board of Roman Catholic Bishops, every Bull or other instrument from Rome is to be submitted; and “ if they shall not find any thing “ in the said instrument, which *shall appear to* “ *them* to be in any way injurious to the safety “ or tranquillity of the United Kingdom, or to “ *the Protestant Establishment in Church or* “ *State*, they shall report the same to his Majesty, or to the Lord Lieutenant in Ireland; “ and thereupon the said instrument shall be “ returned to the person, &c., with an indorsement signed by the President of the Board, “ signifying that the same had been *duly inspected*, and reported upon,” &c. I hope, Sir, that the friends of “ the Protestant Establishment in Church and State,” are duly sensible of your goodness in placing their interest under the protection of such trustworthy guardians. But this by the way. The real practical amount of this final “ Security,” would be another great concession; it would give to the “ bishops of the Roman Catholic “ Church\* in Ireland” a legalized right to communicate, as they please, with the Pope, and

\* In the Bill as first printed, it was “ Roman Catholic “ Church of Ireland;” but this was thought too daring, and was altered in the Committee to “ *in Ireland.*”

to circulate, as they please, whatever mandates he may think fit, or be induced, to issue.

How admirably, in the discharge of this duty, they would consult for the honour of our sovereign, and the liberty and edification of his subjects, has been manifested by recent experience. It was but last year that they published in Ireland a Bull extending the jubilee of the preceding year, (which, in consequence, as it seemed, of the inquiries going forwards in Parliament, they did not then think fit to publish,) to six months longer, excusing the faithful from the trouble of journeying to Rome, and granting a share in its benefits to all, who having with true repentance confessed their sins, and received the holy Eucharist, shall devoutly visit their cathedral, and three other churches, once at least on every day for fifteen days, and there “pour forth their supplication to God, for the propagation of our holy religion, the enlightening of all who are in error” (such is their delicate translation of *pro exaltatione ecclesiæ, hæresum extirpatione, &c.*); “to all,” it adds, “faithfully complying with these conditions, *we mercifully concede, and grant in the Lord, that they, for once, obtain the plenary indulgence of the jubilee, the pardon and remission of all their sins.*”

Again, three years ago these same bishops formally, and with their signatures affixed, set forth an “encyclical letter” of the present Pope, forbidding the circulation of the Holy Scriptures in Ireland, speaking of the translation of them into the common language of the country, (in other words, the authorized version, the Holy Scriptures in the view of the Law,) as a means of “turning the Gospel of Christ “into the Gospel of the Devil,” as a “plague,” “a most wicked novelty,” “noxious both to “faith and morals.”

Sir, I need not say, for you largely dwell on it, that the procuring such instruments from Rome is illegal, that it subjects those who procure them to the penalties of a premunire. To see such severe penalties enforced is more than any of us could wish; but I beg leave to express my entire concurrence in an opinion,\* formerly entertained and avowed by yourself, that at any rate “the security against illicit “correspondence with Rome, *allowed on all “hands to be necessary to the state, ought no longer “to slumber in obsolete black-letter.”* It is too much that these persons should presume on absolute impunity, and should be permitted to

\* Debates, 11th May, 1813.



brave the laws of their country at pleasure. I am well aware, that to expect the interference of the present Attorney General for Ireland against such offenders, might be deemed a little unreasonable. But there is a Secretary of State for the home department, who never yet shrunk from the discharge of any public duty; and there is a Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, under whose very eyes these blasphemous (and the latter of them, I submit, libellous) publications must have issued, From one, or both, of these distinguished and honourable men, better things might have been hoped. If by the very anomalous nature of the policy pursued towards Ireland,—by the Mezentian expedient, which hangs about them some chilling, palsyng, deadening weight, to rob their native spirit of more than half its energy,—if, I say, they are thus prevented from accomplishing the good which their own wishes might prompt them to effect—at least we might expect, that in such a case as this, they would avow and deplore the condition in which they are placed. “Habemus senatus consultum,” they might say to Parliament, “habemus  
“senatus consultum vehemens et grave; non  
“deest reipublicæ consilium neque auctoritas



“ hujus ordinis ; nos, nos, dico apertè, consules  
“ desumus.”

But let this pass. Painful as it is, to see the spiritual interests of five millions of our fellow-subjects thus impudently sported with by Bulls from Rome, in defiance of the law, even this is better, than that it should be done in conformity to law ;—it is less mortifying, than to see these same pestilent absurdities, these monuments at once of the presumption and of the folly of man, formally set forth (as they would be, if your Bill had passed into a law) under the authority of “ his Majesty’s Commissioners for regulating the Intercourse of Subjects of this Realm with the See of Rome.”

And now, Sir, having toiled through the Bill, permit me to recapitulate the fair and full amount of the new “Securities” therein devised. Two of the three provisions, which you are pleased to dignify by that name, are found, in truth, to be new and large concessions to the Roman Catholics ;—the other, —the sole remaining fruit of seven-and-twenty years of hard labour, given successively by some of the acutest and most powerful intellects which England and Ireland have ever

produced, to the momentous problem of “ combining Catholic Freedom with Protestant Security,”—is the amendment of two clauses of the Irish Oath of 1793, by changing therein the conjunction *and* into *or*.

Really, Sir, if the dignity of your station and character did not forbid the supposition, I should imagine that you had no other purpose in recommending such provisions, than to laugh at the whole proceeding. But, no; it comes from you in very sober earnest: and the most charitable way of viewing the whole matter, is to believe, that you have so tied and hampered yourself with this unhappy question, that you must see it disposed of at any hazard. You dare not scrutinize the particular measure devised for the purpose, whether by yourself or others. You are afraid of looking into its details, lest they should be found too absurd, or too mischievous, for even the powers of your eloquence to make them decently producible to an assembly of educated Englishmen. You, therefore, dispose of the whole of them in a lump. And the majority of the House, equally tired of the question, and equally committed upon it, with yourself, cheers you while you say that “ you will not now enter into the question of securities, further than observing, that

*“ you do not think we can have any better than those proposed.”*

*Mr. Canning's Speech.*

From this view of the Bill, I pass to the Speech with which you were pleased to support it.

And here, Sir, I cannot but express my astonishment, that such a Speech should ever have issued from your lips. That there are in it, as there must always be in every considerable effort of your's, proofs of uncommon talent, splendid imagery, felicitous expression, I need not say. But the total absence of every thing like reasoning, the careful avoidance of all grappling with the real difficulties of your subject, the fabrication of foolish objections for the mere purpose of knocking them down,—above all, the tone of exaggeration, of forced passion, of idle menace, nay, of palpable contradiction, which mainly distinguish it,—form such a contrast to your happier, I should say your ordinary, style, as to give it the air of travestie, rather than of a genuine production of your rare genius. I am not ignorant, that it was characterized by one of the ablest of your hearers, as “ unanswerable;” but, in sober truth, I can hardly imagine a more amusing exhibition, than

an answer to it from yourself. How would the unhappy wight, who had ventured in your hearing to utter such an harangue in opposition to you, have been made to wince, and writhe, and groan, under the sting of your sarcastic tongue! You would have silenced him for the remainder of the session.

I, Sir, do not presume,—I am not able,—to answer you: but I will state faithfully every thing in the shape of argument, which is reported to have been spoken by you on this occasion, in order that you may see, how rich a mine of ridicule was open to any one capable of working it.

I. Your first argument is as follows:—"What  
 " was it, that prevented the Catholics from  
 " taking their seats in that House? The oath  
 " against Transubstantiation. But while they  
 " excluded a man from Parliament for his belief  
 " in transubstantiation, it ought not to be for-  
 " gotten, that he who believed in consubstan-  
 " tiation enjoyed every privilege of the Con-  
 " stitution. He did not say there was no dif-  
 " ference between the two opinions; but the  
 " man who could make it a ground of exclusion  
 " from political power, must have a minute  
 " perception of the niceties of ratiocination, for  
 " which he might be envied as a logician, but



“ which was wholly useless for the purposes of common life.”\* *Hear. Hear.*

Sir, I will not do your powerful understanding the injustice of supposing for a single instant, that you ever ascribed the smallest weight to so barefaced a sophism. But non causa pro causâ is, sometimes, a very pretty and effective fallacy; and, in the absence of sounder materials, must not be discarded. Its real value on the present occasion may be best illustrated by putting a parallel case.

In order to protect the Bank of England from forgery, it is highly penal “ for any one to have in his possession a frame for making paper with waved lines.” Imagine, then, some sagacious country-gentleman, fresh from Burn, to come down to the House, and denounce, with becoming self-complacency, the monstrous injustice, that while straight-lined paper may be made with impunity, any honest man, who happens to have a curved-line frame in his house, is liable to be sent to Botany Bay. “ I do not deny,” says he, “ that there is a difference between straight and waved lines; but the man who thinks that difference so great, that the possessor of the waved-line

\* I quote from Parliamentary History and Review for 1825.



“ frame is unfit to abide in the same hemisphere  
 “ with him of the straight, has an acuteness of  
 “ sensibility to lineal rectitude, which, however  
 “ it may demand our admiration, is utterly un-  
 “ fit for ordinary life.”

You will, I am sure, agree with me, that this argument is the very counterpart of your's. The only difference is, that the worthy Baronet would begin by deceiving himself, before he make any attempt on the understanding of his hearers—while the Right Honourable Secretary is altogether indulging in a speculation on the suability of others. On a former occasion, you were heard to state this matter, not certainly with historical, but with logical, accuracy. In arguing in favour of Mr. Plunket's Bill, (March 16, 1821,) you found it convenient to suppose, that the Test, respecting transubstantiation, was framed at the Revolution. “ Concurring  
 “ in the religion of the exiled family,” said you, “ the Roman Catholic subjects of the British  
 “ Crown were held also to be devoted to their  
 “ political claims. The Roman Catholic was  
 “ presumed to be essentially a traitor ; but as  
 “ treason was naturally concealed as much as  
 “ possible, while religion was more readily  
 “ avowed, or ascertained, *the test of the sus-  
 “ pected politics was sought in the professed Creed.*”

“ *Was his Creed his guilt? no.—But his Creed designated the man, and his guilt consisted in his foreign attachment.*”

Sir, you have here given so very happy an explanation of the Test, that I should be ashamed of myself if I were to attempt to improve upon it. I will, therefore, only beg leave to correct you as to its origin, and of course its primary purpose. It was framed (can it really be necessary to remind you?) fifteen years before the Revolution, and at a time when there was no danger of any *foreign attachment*, except indeed to the Pope. But, in preference to using any words of my own, I will avail myself of the admission of a very distinguished Roman Catholic in the year next after its enactment. Father Peter Walsh, in the Dedication of his History of the Irish Remonstrance “ To the Catholics of England, Ireland, Scotland,” &c. (p. 15,) says, “ if any shall object those penal statutes, which may perhaps be thought by some to have all their quarrel, and all their force, against some harmless doctrines and practices, as, for example, against our doctrines of the Consecration and Transubstantiation, and our practice withall of the adoration of the Host, which this present Parliament at Westminster in their late Act may be

“ thought by some to make the principal mark,  
 “ whereat all the arrows of disfavor must now  
 “ be shot: the answer is both consequential  
 “ and clear. 1. That the Roman Catholics in  
 “ general of these kingdoms, both Ecclesiasticks  
 “ and Laicks, have always hitherto declined to  
 “ disown those Anti-Catholic positions, which  
 “ maintain the Pope’s pretences of all supreme  
 “ both spiritual and temporal dominion. 2.  
 “ Their Missionaries, i. e. *their Priests, labour*  
 “ *to infuse into all their penitents, all their own*  
 “ *principles of equivocation and mental reservation*  
 “ *in swearing any Oath, even of allegiance or su-*  
 “ *premacy to the King, and forswearing any thing*  
 “ *or doctrine whatsoever, except only those articles,*  
 “ *which by the indispensable condition of their*  
 “ *Communion they may not dissemble upon oath.*  
 “ 3. That the tenet of Transubstantiation is one  
 “ of *these*; therefore to discover by this (how-  
 “ ever otherwise in itself a very harmless cri-  
 “ terium) the mischief which they conceive to  
 “ go along with it through the folly of Roman  
 “ Catholics in these dominions, *they make it the*  
 “ *test of discriminating the loyally principled*  
 “ Protestant from the disloyal and dissembling  
 “ Papist.”

Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity  
 of citing this passage, because it not only af-

fords a very complete answer to all the sagacious observations we are in the habit of hearing from divers persons besides yourself, respecting the folly of the law in demanding such a Test ;—but also because it silences another, and apparently much graver, objection. Almost every one who speaks or writes on the side of the Roman Catholics, from the gravest senator down to the last speaker at a hustings or a tavern dinner, has been accustomed to triumph over the gross absurdity of requiring Oaths as a security from Roman Catholics, while they are charged with holding opinions subversive of the sanction of all oaths. Father Walsh has shown to us, that our ancestors were not so foolish, as these very wise persons are pleased to imagine : he has told us, that there are tenets which, by the indispensable condition of Roman Catholic communion, may not be dissembled upon oath, and that Transubstantiation is one of them, (as well, I suppose, as every other Article of Pius IV.'s Creed.) He has, moreover, told us, that to another class of oaths the same sacredness of obligation does not belong,—that to them, according to the doctrine of those Missionary Priests from Rome, equivocation and mental reservation may be very safely applied,—and that this is especially the case with Oaths of



Allegiance or Supremacy taken to the King. I heartily congratulate you, Sir, on a discovery so honourable to the persons, whose cause you support. But in saying this, permit me at the same time to say, that I have no doubt whatever, there are very few of them in England half so bad, as these their principles, if they continue to be their principles; nay, I have no doubt, that if Popes, or Priests, were to attempt now-a-days to draw such principles into practice among them here, we should soon see the happiest results from the experiment. But then, I am sorry to add, this admission must be confined to England:—unfortunately, there is another country concerned, and he must be a bold man, who would venture with equal readiness to answer for the mass of the Roman Catholic population, above all of the Roman Catholic Clergy, in that country. I will, therefore, here subjoin one or two specimens of the sort of management, to which Oaths of Allegiance to temporal Sovereigns (according to Father Walsh) are obnoxious.

In the first place, any one, who holds the supreme power of the Pope even in temporal matters, may safely swear that he has “no  
“temporal or civil power, direct or indirect,  
“within this realm,” because his power, though



it operates on temporal matters, is not temporal, but spiritual. Again: by any general, though negative declaration, against any authority in general to be in the Pope, is only intended to deny his having an *ordinary* authority; it does not extend to his extraordinary,\* casual, celestial, divine, authority, on great, and unusual, contingencies. Once more, there is a very important distinction between the *specificative* and *reduplicative* sense. This will be best explained by an example. In Father Walsh's time, the Irish clergy were willing to subscribe to this proposition, "It is our doctrine, that we  
" subjects owe so natural and just obedience to  
" our king, that no power, under any pretext  
" soever, can ever dispense with, or free us of  
" the same." Here, the reduplicative sense applies to "*we subjects*," that is, *while* we are subjects, which we shall not be, when the Pope by a judicial Process, or Bull, shall denounce the King excommunicated and deprived of the crown. The reduplicative sense applies also to "our King," that is, *while* he is our King, &c.† Such were the principles of the Congregation,

\* This may probably explain, what most Protestant readers have been at a loss to understand, the Pope's DOMINIUM ALTUM, maintained by Mr. Butler.

† See Walsh's 2d and 3d Treatises.

of Irish Clergy in 1666, according to this honest Franciscan. Nor would they be moved from them by the precepts of the Apostles commanding obedience to the civil powers, even under the reigns of the most tyrannical emperors. “They say, with Bellarmine,” (these are Walsh’s words,) “*the Apostles, with the Fathers, and other primitive Christians, dissembled on this point, because they had not strength enough of men and arms to oppose.*”\*

\* Walsh, Third Treatise, p. 31. Before I take leave of the Irish Priests of Charles II.’s time, I think it right to notice a very important mis-statement of Dr. Lingard respecting them. “The Irish Remonstrance” of 1661, of which Walsh was the prime advocate, was a most honest and loyal instrument, and was designed to satisfy the government of the sound principles of those who subscribed it. Accordingly Dr. Lingard, in a Tract published a few years ago, entitled “Documents to ascertain the Sentiments of British Catholics in former Ages respecting the power of the Popes,” thus speaks of it:—

“In January, 1661, *the Catholic Prelates* of Ireland assembled at Dublin, despatched an agent to England, to offer their congratulations to the King on his restoration,” &c. “Shortly afterwards *they* transmitted to the same agent a paper to be laid before the king, entitled ‘The humble remonstrance, acknowledgment and petition, of the Roman Catholic Clergy of Ireland.’ As this document (Dr. Lingard continues) is not generally known, though it affords a strong argument in proof of the loyalty and innocence of *that much-slandered body, and shows the agreement between their principles and those*

In what degree the living generation of Irish priests may have departed from these principles

“ *of the Catholics of England*, I shall offer no apology for transcribing it entire.” Accordingly he transcribes it, and adds, “ the Chapter of the Catholic Clergy in England, who were at this time without a Bishop, directed Dr. Ellice, their Dean, to write a letter to the Bishop of Dromore, declaring their entire concurrence in the sentiments it contained, and their willingness to subscribe a similar declaration, whenever an opportunity might offer.”

Now, the obvious meaning of this statement is, that the body of Roman Catholic Prelates and Clergy in Ireland, as well as the Roman Catholic Clergy of England, held and subscribed to the sentiments contained in that instrument. Of the English Clergy he says only what is true : but, with regard to those of Ireland, the real facts, as Dr. Lingard must have known from the very authority which he cites, are as follows :—The Remonstrance was *not* transmitted by the *Prelates* at Dublin to their Agent in England, but was given to him by a layman in London, *without their knowledge or concurrence*. Only one of their body, the Bishop of Dromore, (who died soon afterwards,) could be induced to sign it. It was censured at Rome, by the University of Louvain, by the Nuncio at Brussels—and was rejected almost universally by the Irish Prelates and Priesthood. Out of nearly 3,000 seculars and regulars, 70 only subscribed the Remonstrance, some of these subsequently withdrew their signatures—others were excommunicated, and several, in consequence, perished from want.

I have been engaged in controversy with Dr. Lingard ; but I can assure him, that it is not with the feelings of controversy, that I now entreat him, in the name of that Christian Faith of which we both are ministers, to step forward and rescue his

of their predecessors, is more than I can presume to say. If charity teaches us to hope the best, it does not forbid us to take all reasonable precaution against the worst.—But I turn to something else, which I will take a little out of the order in which it stands in your Speech, because it has an obvious connection with the matters I have just considered.

You say, Sir, that the long OATH required to be taken by the Roman Catholic, “ was originally devised *as a taunt* against his religion, “ though it is now proposed as a limitation to “ his capability of obtaining power.”

I assure you, that it is with reluctance I contradict you on a point of history: but the importance of the cause, of which I am the humble advocate, will not permit, nor would you desire, that I should sacrifice truth to courtesy. That oath, as I am surprised that you have forgotten, was, in its most important particulars, first prescribed by the 3 James I. c. 4. s. 15; and James, as I need not inform you, was one of the last of our princes, who would have given vent to an idle *taunt* against

name and his profession from that foul stain, which such a gross mis-statement must, if unexplained, indelibly stamp upon them.



the religion of Rome.\* No, Sir, this oath had a much graver origin; it was rendered necessary by the most atrocious act of wickedness recorded in the English annals. “After the  
 “infernal horrors of the Gunpowder Treason,  
 “James I. caused the Oath of Allegiance to be  
 “enacted in Parliament, as a Test,\* by which  
 “his loyal Catholics, who were attached to  
 “their duties, as subjects, might be discrimi-  
 “nated from those other Catholics, who were  
 “under the predominancy of another power.”†  
 Whose language have I here employed to correct your very inconsiderate assertion? It is not my own,—it is not the language of any Protestant controversialist,—no, nor even of some solitary, liberal, Roman Catholic. It is part of the recorded and solemn statement of the “Committee of English Catholics” in 1791, addressed to the three Apostolic Vicars, in vindication of themselves, and of all that was most respectable in rank, in opulence, in character, of the laity of that Communion, when they

\* James says, himself of this oath, “*Tanto studio tantâque solitudine cavebam, ne quidquam hoc juramento continetur, præter fidelitatis illius, civilisque et temporalis obedientiæ, quam ipsa natura præscribit.*”—*Jac. I. Apol. Lond. 1619, p. 289.*

† Declaration and Protestation, &c. p. 128.



were arraigned by their spiritual superiors, for voluntarily disclaiming before the world those pernicious principles, which had too long received the countenance and support of the highest authorities in their church.

Sir, I do not wish to dwell on the shameful parts of the history of my Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen; but when the most distinguished of their advocates strives to convert the guilt and opprobrium of Rome into an occasion of censur  and reproach against the defenders of the Church of England, it is not easy, nor would it be becoming, to sit down in silence under your attack.

It has been seen, that the Gunpowder Treason was the proximate cause of this oath being imposed; but though the proximate, it was very far from being the only, cause. That Treason itself was, in truth, a natural fruit of the doctrines then almost universally taught in the Church of Rome. In particular, as you need not to be informed, Seminaries were founded and endowed at Rheims, at Douay, at Rome itself, for the education of English Priests; whose first duty it was to poison the minds of their people against the heretical government under which they lived. The right of destroying heretics was (I wish I could say

that it no longer is) a part of the Canon Law ; that right had been recently exercised against the sacred persons of sovereign princes. The same Canon Law (as we have already seen) held, and still holds, it a venial offence, to put to death an excommunicated person, whatever be his station, provided that *it be done from zeal for religion*.

These, and such as these, were the reasons for imposing this oath, which you have thought fit to describe as an idle taunt. Believe me, Sir, it is not thus, that it has ever been regarded at Rome. It was there viewed as a sober, serious, formidable attack on some of the most favoured dogmas of the Vatican. Accordingly, this oath was solemnly condemned by at least four Popes, besides Nuncios, and Universities. Paul V. fulminated his censure of it in the following decisive terms:—"It ought to be sufficiently manifest to you from the words themselves, that *an oath of this kind cannot be taken, without abandoning the Catholic Faith, and the Salvation of your Souls* ; for many are the things contained in it, which are manifestly opposed to faith and salvation."\* Urban

\* Satis vobis ex verbis ipsis perspicuum esse debet, quod hujusmodi juramentum salvâ fide Catholicâ et salute animarum vestrarum præstari non potest, cum multa contineat, quæ fidei atque saluti apertè adversantur.

VIII., in his Brief of May 30, 1626, calls it  
 “ that noxious and unlawful English Oath of  
 “ Allegiance, the object of which is not only to  
 “ secure fidelity to the King, but *to wrest the*  
 “ *Sceptre of the Universal Church from the Vicars*  
 “ *of Almighty God.*”\*

\* Noxium illud et illicitum Angliæ fidelitatis juramentum, quo non solùm id agitur, ut fides Regi servetur, sed ut sacrum universæ ecclesiæ sceptrum eripiatur Vicariis Omnipotentis Dei.

In order that my readers may know what are the positions, which called forth these censures, I here subjoin King James's Oath.

OATH TO BE TAKEN BY 3 JAMES I. c. 4. s. 18.

I, A. B., do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify and declare in my conscience before God and the world, that our Sovereign Lord King James is lawful and rightful King of this realm, and of all other His Majesty's dominions and countries; and that the Pope, neither of himself, nor by any authority of the Church or See of Rome, or by any other means, with any other, hath any power or authority to depose the King, or to dispose of any of His Majesty's kingdoms or dominions, or to authorize any foreign prince to invade or annoy him or his countries, or to discharge any of his subjects of their allegiance and obedience to His Majesty, or to give license or leave to any of them to bear arms, raise tumults, or to offer any violence or hurt to His Majesty's royal person, state, or government, or to any of His Majesty's subjects within his dominions. And I do swear from my heart, that notwithstanding any declaration or sentence of excommunication or deprivation made or granted, or to be made or granted, by the Pope or his successors, or any authority derived or pretended to be derived

So late as the year 1768, the Pope's Legate at Brussels, when an oath was in contemplation to be taken by the Irish Roman Catholics, wrote to Ireland on the subject in the following

from him or his see against the said King, his heirs or successors, or any absolution of the said subjects from their obedience, I will bear faith and true allegiance to his Majesty, his heirs and successors, and him and them will defend to the uttermost of my power, against all conspiracies and attempts whatsoever which shall be made against his or their persons, their crown and dignity, by reason or colour of any such sentence or declaration, or otherwise, and will do my best endeavour to disclose and make known to His Majesty, his heirs and successors, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies, which I shall know or hear of to be against him or any of them. And I do further swear that I do from my heart abhor, detest and abjure, as impious and heretical, this damnable doctrine and position, that Princes, which be excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever.

And I do believe, and in my conscience am resolved, that neither the Pope, nor any other person whatsoever, hath power to absolve me of this oath, or any part thereof, which I acknowledge by good and full authority to be lawfully ministered unto me, and do renounce all pardons and dispensations to the contrary.

And all these things I do plainly and sincerely acknowledge and swear, according to these express words by me spoken, and according to the plain and common sense and understanding of the same words, without any equivocation or mental evasion, or secret reservation whatsoever; and I do make this recognition and acknowledgment heartily, willingly and truly, upon the true faith of a Christian.—So help me God.



terms :—“ That the *abhorrence and detestation* of  
“ the doctrine, that faith is not to be kept with  
“ Heretics, and that Princes deprived by the  
“ Pope may be deposed or murdered by their  
“ subjects, as expressed in that proposed oath,  
“ are *absolutely intolerable*; because *those doctrines*  
“ *are defended and contended for by most Catholic*  
“ *nations, and the Holy See has frequently followed*  
“ *them in practice.*”

Dr. Troy, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, contents himself with remarking upon this, “ that the Pope’s Legate at Brussels delivered his own private unauthorized opinion.”\* But *the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland was under his jurisdiction.*

Sir, it was not till within our own times, till the year 1778, that this oath was tolerated at Rome; nor even then formally and expressly, nor without much of qualification and reserve, and some considerable alteration of its terms. In particular, it was not endured that the doctrine of the Pope’s *deposing power* should be called *impious, heretical and damnable*; for, as Dr. Milner says, “ these are all high theological  
“ qualifications, which no private Catholic,  
“ without inclining to schism, can undertake to

\* Sir J. C. Hippesley’s Speech, 1810.—Supp. App. p. 26.



“pronounce on a *controverted* point,” (such, it seems, the deposing power still is,) “on the strength of his private judgment.”\*

II. But I return to the arguments of your Speech. That which comes next in order is as follows. “The next ground of objection is, “that the (Roman) Catholics hold the doctrine “of EXCLUSIVE SALVATION. Why, almost all “the churches are exclusive on some articles; “and let not those members, who urge this “objection, forget that the Church of England holds the Athanasian Creed—a human “exposition of the great mysteries of Christianity—and holds it with the expressed declaration, that they who differ from it cannot “be saved. With this fact before them, could “the (Roman) Catholics be excluded from the “enjoyment of their civil rights, on the ground “of believing the doctrine of exclusion?”

Sir, the laws of the old Athenian legislator, Draco, were said to be written in blood; for he annexed the penalty of death to every offence whatever. Suppose, now, that a citizen of Megara had observed to a friend at Athens, on the cruelty of this sanguinary code,—“This is

\* Ecclesiastical Democracy detected, p. 215.

“ a dreadful system of your’s, to put a man  
“ to death for stealing a few figs, or breaking  
“ into his neighbour’s olive-ground.” “ Why,  
“ my dear friend,” answers the Athenian, “ how  
“ can you talk so absurdly? did not you your-  
“ selves hang a man, last week, for murder?”

This, Sir, affords but a very faint illustration of the wisdom of putting our use of the Athanasian Creed on a par with the tyrannical and intolerant principles of the Church of Rome. That Church, among a thousand similar extravagancies, sentences a man to the loss of all hope of Christian Salvation, who says, that it is contrary to the institution of Christ, *to mix water with wine* at the holy communion;\* the Church of England, in the Athanasian Creed, pronounces the same of one who impugns the fundamental truths of Christianity; and you are pleased to say, that this deprives us of all right to find fault with the exclusive spirit of Rome.

As to the Athanasian Creed being “ a human *exposition* of the great mysteries of Christianity,” you must forgive my telling you, that if you had taken the trouble of acquainting yourself with the nature of that formulary, you would not

\* Con. Trid. Sess. 22. Can. 9.

have thought it a fit subject of sneer or banter. The Athanasian Creed is not an *exposition* of any mysteries; it does not aim at any thing so absurd. But it *states* the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel; and in respect to the doctrine of the Trinity, accompanies the statement with certain distinctions, which were rendered necessary by the attempts of Heretics to corrupt the doctrine itself, by their own daring innovations. It also accompanies its statement with denouncing the awful sentence on unbelievers, which our Lord himself denounced, when he gave to his apostles the solemn charge to go and preach the Gospel to every creature, "he that believeth not shall be damned."

You will perceive, therefore, that the main question respecting the Athanasian Creed is, first, whether its doctrines be true; secondly, whether they be fundamental. The Church of England holds them to be both true and fundamental, and therefore scruples not to receive and use the Creed, notwithstanding the strong terms in which the danger of unbelief is there set forth.

Now, Sir, our complaint against the Church of Rome is, not that it excludes from Salvation those who impugn doctrines which it thinks fundamental, but that it holds as fundamental

one particular doctrine which requires the belief, under pain of damnation, of every thing else whatever which it shall choose to prescribe, I mean the infallible authority of the Church. This one tenet enslaves the minds of those who hold it; or, at any rate, it makes them unfit to legislate for any other Church. For it teaches them to regard that Church, as leading its members to perdition. In respect to our own Church, the Protestant Church of England and Ireland, it is admitted to be either an integral part, or an inseparable adjunct, of the *present* Constitution of this Kingdom. The writ of Summons to Parliament expresses now, as it did of old, *one of the principal ends of holding it to be, to consult for the safety and defence of the Church of England*. We say, therefore, that those who believe that this Church leads its members to damnation, as they cannot, with a sound conscience, consult for its safety and defence, cannot, on the principles of the British Constitution, be entrusted with the legislative powers of the state.

This, Sir, is the argument for excluding Roman Catholics from Parliament, which we found on their doctrine of exclusive salvation; and you will, I am sure, perceive, that it remains

completely untouched by your pleasant commentary on the Athanasian Creed.

A more plausible answer is sometimes suggested, that whatever be the doctrines of the Roman Church itself, its lay members, those at least who would be likely to sit in Parliament, will trouble themselves very little with theological points, but will suffer all questions respecting the Church to go on pretty much as they do at present. Sir, I certainly will not insult the members of a different communion, by speaking, or thinking, so ill of them, as to suppose, that, if they hold the doctrine of their Church in this particular, it will be perfectly inoperative. On the contrary, those who really hold it, must feel every inducement and temptation to act upon it; their spiritual instructors will be ready enough to apprise them of this duty, and their own passions will make them very willing to acquire the merit of obeying it. In a Church which keeps so accurate a ledger of each individual's merits and demerits, and allows so large a premium on acts of obedience to itself, we may be quite sure, that there will be no want of inclination to comply with so easy a demand.—It may be said, however, that there are many professed members of the



Church of Rome, who do not hold this doctrine, whatever their Church may tell them. I really believe, that there is much truth in this observation; and if you could ascertain correctly, who these are, I, for one, should not be afraid of seeing such men in Parliament. But, in the meanwhile, it is quite idle to speculate on the possible conduct of these mere *entes rationis*.

That I have not too strongly stated the sentiments of the Church of Rome, even in England, respecting the spiritual state of the members of every other Church, especially of our own, I shall beg leave to demonstrate by one or two examples. Mr. Gandolphy, one of the most learned and eloquent divines of his Church in modern days, published, about twelve or fourteen years ago, four volumes of sermons, which received the highest praises from the See of Rome, and were *authoritatively* pronounced worthy to be "*cased in cedar and gold*." From them I select the following passages:—"We deny holiness and theological virtue to all sectaries, because they want these first principles of piety and virtue, and constitute private reason and judgment the motive and the rule of every moral action." "On all and each of the members of Protestantism, you may write *schismatical*. I will not attempt a

“ comparative review of their distinguishing  
“ defects; this one noxious property, which  
“ they all inherit, absolutely vitiates what is  
“ otherwise good and fair, and not a fruit can  
“ they produce, however inviting in form and  
“ lustre, which is not of this schismatical qua-  
“ lity.”\* “ Even the Church of England,  
“ which is the eldest of her heretical sister-  
“ hood, is a schismatical branch, *a dead limb of*  
“ *the true vine, a rebellious child*. My brethren,  
“ until the Reformation, the English Church  
“ formed a great branch of the Catholic Church  
“ of Christ, and in that quality she communi-  
“ cated with all the other churches of the world  
“ in communion with her. She was a limb of  
“ the true vine, and, abiding in it, brought forth  
“ much fruit. She shot her tendrils into every  
“ corner of these islands, and every cluster gave  
“ delight to the husbandman, because he saw  
“ that it was his own vine,—the vine that he  
“ had planted. But having been severed by  
“ the destructive hand of schism, *with a hateful*  
“ *eye* he now views the sickly sprouts, which  
“ issue from its fallen, crushed, and broken  
“ branches. As the branch, he says, cannot  
“ bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the

\* Vol. ii. p. 75.

“vine,—so *this* shall wither, and they shall  
 “gather *it* up, and cast *it* into the fire, and *it*  
 “shall burn.”\*

I will now give some specimens of the devotions of the faithful, formed on these doctrines. In “A Manual of Prayers, and other Christian Devotions, by R. C. D.D. Booker, 1800,” I find the following instructive and interesting particulars, “Morning Prayer for Wednesday,” p. 147.

*The Litany of Intercession for England.*

“O God the Father,” &c.—“Holy Mary, Queen of Angels, *whose powerful intercession destroys all heresies*, pray for England.”—“From the dangers most justly threatening our sins, deliver England, O Lord. From the *spirit of pride, rebellion, and apostasy*, deliver England.—From the spirit of hypocrisy, *prophaneness, and sacrilege*, deliver England.”

“O Eternal God, who in *this great deluge of heresy*, which wholly overflows and almost covers the face of *this land*, hast vouchsafed to select a small number for thyself, and save them in thy holy ark from the common inundation: we praise and glorify,” &c. p. 153.

\* Vol. i. p. 368.

*A Prayer for the preservation of the True Church.*

“ O Lord, who can abide it? what heart so  
“ stony, as to forbear weeping and lamenting  
“ for them, who are thus blinded, and *daily mis-*  
“ *lead others into the pit of heresy and eternal*  
“ *damnation.*”

*A Prayer when the Church is Afflicted.*

“ O God, *the enemies of the Church are entered*  
“ *into thy inheritance; they have defiled the*  
“ *temples dedicated to thy honour.*” “ We  
“ are become a reproach to our neighbours;  
“ they despise and make a jest of us.” “ Why  
“ dost thou so deliver us into the hands of our  
“ adversaries?” “ Be mindful, O Lord, of thy  
“ holy Church, and leave it not in the hands  
“ of thy enemies, but *deliver it by thy strong*  
“ *power.*” “ *Awake, O Lord God, delay no*  
“ *longer, but come to succour thy people, make*  
“ *haste to help thy faithful servants, and save*  
“ *us from the hands of our enemies, &c. that we*  
“ *may have a little taste of the sweetness of thy*  
“ *promises, which our forefathers have so abun-*  
“ *dantly experienced.*”

Sir, you will readily believe me, that I do not complain of these prayers; they accord



with the feelings of persons who hold the principles of the Church of Rome; I only mean, that those who hold principles, which produce such feelings, are not quite fit to be entrusted with the power of legislating for our schismatical, heretical, and, as they conceive, damnable Church.

If I were to inquire into the expression of the feelings of Roman Catholics in Ireland, on the same subject, it cannot be doubted, that stronger language of detestation and abhorrence would easily be found.—But I forbear.—I will only exhibit one specimen which falls under my notice while I am thus writing to you. Dr. Doyle, who swore before the Committee of the House of Lords, that he had a higher respect for the Established Church, than for any other body of Christians separated from the Church of Rome, has just expressed himself, in his Letter to the Earl of Farnham, in the following handsome terms toward it.

“ When men gaze for a considerable time at  
 “ the *most hideous monster*, they can view it with  
 “ diminished horror; but a man of reflection,  
 “ living in Ireland, and coolly observing the  
 “ workings of the Church Establishment, would  
 “ seek for some likeness to it among *the priests*  
 “ of *Juggernaut*, who sacrifice the poor naked



*“ human victims to their impure and detestable  
“ idols.”*

The immediate exciting cause of this rabid fury in your favourite divine was the recent procedure at Cavan; it has had the effect of absolutely dementing him; unless, indeed, he is influenced by a sort of perverted pride, which makes him eager to show to the world how much will be endured in him, before he is cast off by you and his other liberal friends in Parliament. For myself, when I see in him the fallen spirit of the Church of Rome, thus venting its impotent malice against that Reformed Church, to which, in its own despite, it is compelled still to look up with respect and honour, I am reminded of another address on an occasion not totally dissimilar:

“ To thee I call, but with  
No friendly voice, —————  
————— to tell thee how I hate thy beams,  
That bring to my remembrance from what state  
I’ve fall’n, how glorious once, —————  
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,  
Warring in Heav’n against Heav’n’s matchless King!”

III. I proceed to another of your arguments.

“ The doctrine of ABSOLUTION had also occasioned much objection. In the abstract

“ that doctrine was *absurd*.”—I trust, Sir, that you meant to confine your censure to the extravagant doctrine of the Church of Rome; not to extend it (as your words seem to imply) to absolution generally; for if the latter were intended, I am bound to tell you, that, in the plenitude of your parliamentary privilege, you have presumed to visit with your ban, one of the most solemn acts and declarations of our blessed Lord himself. After his resurrection from the dead, when “ all power had been given to Him in heaven and in earth,” He conferred on his apostles, and in them on their successors to the end of time, the power of absolution, soberly and soundly understood.

“ In the abstract, that doctrine was absurd; but the evidence before the Committee of the House of Lords went to prove, that the absolution depended *on the disposition of the party*, and not on the abstract power of the party giving it.”

Sir, it is not easy to restrain my pen within the bounds, which I would wish to prescribe to it, when I reflect either on the foul deception practised in this particular by the Roman Catholic bishops upon Parliament, or the deplorable facility with which you, and men like you, permitted yourselves to be duped by

them. The real doctrine of the Church of Rome is this, that no disposition of the penitent, not even the deepest and most perfect contrition, will obtain for them absolution of their sins, without the serious purpose of having recourse for it to their priest. In that case, and in that case only, (of their perfect contrition, and their serious purpose of confessing to the priest and seeking his absolution,) the actual interposition of the priest is not necessary.

But consider how small a part of the way this carries us. The penitent may not judge for himself, whether his *contrition be perfect*: before he can have the comfort of knowing this, he must go to his priest, and receive the glad assurance from his mouth.

The main mischief, however, is, that perfect contrition is not necessary. Imperfect contrition (consisting, for instance, of the fear of hell; the absence of the will of sinning, and the hope of pardon) are sufficient, *with absolution*, to wipe out all past guilt, and to ensure to the sinner his future admission to the everlasting happiness of heaven. Need I say what temptation to sin such a doctrine holds out? above all, what ruinous security of mind, what callousness of conscience, under the most aggravated

guilt, must be its practical result? That it has not its full effect in countries where better principles prevail, and the purer faith of the nation at large controuls and chastens the influence of the worst corruptions of the Church of Rome, may make those who live in such countries slow to credit the enormous extent of mischief produced by it, when suffered to have its full and unmitigated sway. But turn to the evidence before you, seek the truth, not in the “goodly glozes” of Dr. Doyle, but in the testimony of a man, who has no interests of an established Church to bias his judgment, or, if you will, to impair his credit,—of one, who has no interest whatever in the question, except the highest indeed, but that which is least likely to mislead him, the general interest of religious truth and liberty—turn to the evidence of Mr. Burnett, a dissenting minister, resident at Cork, and let him tell you what he has himself seen and known. “*No Roman Catholic of the lower orders,*” says he, “*has any dread of final perdition. I have spoken with them frequently on the subject, and never found one of them that supposed he could go to hell.*” “*The confidence of the people in their absolution, which follows confession, is such as completely to destroy in their minds any fear of future punishment.* I



“ have found this to be the case generally; and  
“ in cases where they are convicted in courts  
“ of justice, they very seldom show any thing  
“ like a feeling sense of their situation; which,  
“ I conceive, arises solely from the conviction,  
“ that the absolution enjoyed at the hands of  
“ the priest will do every thing for them. I  
“ *have seen, myself, thirty-five individuals in the*  
“ *dock together, sentenced to death, and I could*  
“ *not perceive the least degree of emotion in conse-*  
“ *quence of the pronouncing of sentence, all which*  
“ *I attributed to the confidence placed in the absolu-*  
“ *tion of the clergy.*”\*

Sir, I will not stop to confute your feeble attempt to prove that our own Church holds the same doctrine, with that of Rome, on this subject. That I have sufficiently done in former publications: but I will once more ask you, whether you ever knew a single instance, in which the absolution of the Church of England has been perverted to the same mischievous purpose, as that which is proved to be the ordinary effect of the absolution of Romish priests upon the populace of Ireland? If you have not, does it become any judicious statesman, in the greatest practical question which can be pro-

\* Evidence before Lords, p. 470.



posed to the deliberation of parliament, to argue on the supposition, founded or unfounded, of a mere theoretical accordance of the two Churches, while the practical results are so totally dissimilar ?

IV. I turn to your fourth topic.

“ The next objection—and it was one which he could not expect to have heard—was, “ that the Roman Catholics attached an over-weening value to the merits of good works.”

Sir, I will boldly venture to assert, and to appeal to your own better recollection for the truth of the assertion, that you never yet met with man, woman, or child, quite so silly, as to advance this objection, which you are pleased to honour with a most grave, laboured, historical, theological,—and (need I add ?) triumphant reply.

But how, it may be asked, can so portentous an hallucination have come over you ? I will here hazard a conjecture. It is not improbable, that in the course of your morning's reading, preparatory to a debate which was to crown your other high distinctions with the honours of a dilettanti degree in divinity, you happened to find, that one of the charges, sometimes brought against the Church of Rome, was the

excessive value ascribed by it to the works of man. This theological objection you hastily mistook for a political one! And how was it to be treated? A man of ordinary genius would have been content to say, that however erroneous the tenet might be, its obvious tendency is, to render those, who hold it, good and useful subjects;—that it is the height of injustice, therefore, to make it, in any degree, a plea for abridging their political privileges. But this was very far from satisfying your aspirations. You aimed at higher glory, than a dull matter-of-fact argument, however convincing, could bestow. You were pleased, therefore, to contrast the alleged error of the Church of Rome with what you, I doubt not, seriously believe to be a notion of the modern Calvinists. “Would it not,” you say, “be more dangerous to a state to make *good works* *nothing*, and faith every thing? I prefer the man, who insists on the necessity of good works as part of his religious creed, to the man, who *considers himself controlled in all his actions by an inexorable fate.*”

To the peculiar tenets of that denomination of Christians, to which you appear to allude, I am very far from subscribing: but thus much I will say, that no man, who knows what they

really are, will ever treat them with contempt. You, Sir, do not appear to have yet risen above the vulgarest prejudices on this subject: else, you would have known, that opinions which have commended themselves to the full and firm conviction of some of the ablest, as well as holiest, men who have ever adorned our Church, are not to be thus blown down by "the whiff and wind" of the smartest piece of rhetoric ever discharged in your honourable House.

But it may be said that you were not speaking of modern or sober-minded Calvinists, but of the wild opinions of the fanatics in Charles's time. "Refer to history, and see what it teaches on the subject. Who were they who brought the monarch to the block? Who stripped episcopacy of the mitre, and of all its spiritual authority and temporal possessions? The Papists? No: but they who were most violently opposed to them."

Your argument now stands thus; because great mischief was inflicted on our Church and nation by one set of madmen two hundred years ago, therefore it is unjust or foolish, or both, to guard against the avowed hostility of another class of enemies in our own days—because the Dutch fleet burned Chatham in the

seventeenth century, therefore none of our dock yards ought to be protected against a French fleet in the nineteenth.

I am afraid, Sir, we gain but little by this improvement of the argument. Leaving, therefore, this very favourite piece of eloquence (for so the cheers which attended it prove it to have been) to the satisfaction of yourself and the admiration of your hearers, I will remind you of a real political objection against the Roman Catholics, founded on the value they attach to good works—but then it is to the good works of others, not their own—and consequently it has no tendency to improve either their loyalty or their morals. On the merit of the supernumerary satisfactions of departed saints, the doctrine of indulgences—remissions, that is, of the pains of purgatory—has been built. These indulgences have often been employed in Ireland as means to stimulate and reward the disloyalty of the people to their heretical sovereigns. So late as the reign of George II., it is recorded in the Journals of the Irish House of Commons, that money was raised by them for the express purpose of raising a force to expel the reigning family, and restore the House of Stuart. It is true, that some member of the late Com-



mittee affected to consider the statement as of no authority, because the same House of Commons had passed the well-known resolution against the agistment tithe!—as if one act of injustice, not only vitiated all their other acts, but threw discredit on all their records. I am happy, however, to be enabled to confirm the truth of this record by independent testimony. De Bruys, a contemporary Roman Catholic historian, in his *Life of Benedict XIII.*,\* says that that Pope, on the death of George I., “ordered public prayers, and *granted indulgences for the success of the enterprise of the Pretender.*” But enough of this.

V. I pass with you to a matter of higher importance. “Neither do I see any valid objection,” you say, “in the argument drawn from the belief in the spiritual supremacy of the Pope. The question is not, whether it is acted upon by the (Roman) Catholics, but whether it is acted on in such a way, as to make it dangerous to the state.” You then proceed to a lengthened vindication of the injured honour of Dr. Doyle, and take occasion to pronounce upon him a panegyric, which I

\* *Hist. des Papes*, c. v. p. 558.

am quite sure we shall never hear from you again. That divine has, indeed, been lately pleased to spare both friend and foe all further trouble about his character: he has settled that matter for himself; and it would henceforth be

“ with taper light

To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,”

if any one else were to attempt to illustrate what he has made so very clear.

But, Sir, the argument of Supremacy must, I fear, detain us a little longer than I could wish.

Much confusion often arises on this point, from not sufficiently bearing in mind the very different foundations of papal authority, which are recognized in different countries. The French look to the councils of Constance, Pisa, and Basil, not only as truly œcumenical, but as having so fixed the superiority of councils over the Pope, and in other respects so limited his power, that not even the decrees of subsequent councils, much less the constitutions of Popes themselves, can work any material change in the principles there established. But besides this general security, they procured for themselves what was called “ the pragmatic sanction,” which recognized on the part of

Rome a very large measure of independence in the Church of France; and though this pragmatic sanction was afterwards displaced by a less favourable instrument,—the concordat between Francis I. and Leo X.,—still the result has been the establishment of so strong a barrier against the worst usurpations of Rome, that the liberties of the Gallican Church have formed a proud exception to the general state of spiritual bondage, in which other countries of that communion have been all, more or less, enthralled. For by the rest, the acts of the councils, which I have mentioned above, (excepting the decrees of Constance against heretics,) were all rejected; and in their place the decrees of the Council of Florence (which was held by Eugenius IV. at the same time with the Council of Basil, and in express opposition to it) were universally received. Now, the Fathers of Florence ascribed so large and sweeping an authority to the Pope, that the French have not only uniformly refused to recognize this council as valid, but when at Trent there was an attempt to obtain the re-enactment of the Florentine Decree, the Cardinal of Lorraine and the other French prelates positively declared, that they would quit the council,

and protest against its decrees, unless the measure were abandoned.

From this statement it will appear, how very fallacious it is, to quote, as is often done, the language of French jurists or divines, in particular the famous declaration of the clergy of that church in 1682, as authority for the doctrine of Roman Catholics in other countries on the supremacy of the Pope. To the latter, the following decree of Florence is the known and recognized standard of orthodoxy on this point. “ We define, that the Holy Apostolic See, and “ the Roman Pontiff, have a primacy over the “ whole world, and that the Roman Pontiff “ himself is the successor of St. Peter, the “ chief of the Apostles, and true Vicar (or representative, *Τοποῦνος*) of Christ, and that “ he is Head of the whole Church, and the “ Father and Teacher of all Christians; and “ that to him in St. Peter was delegated by “ our Lord Jesus Christ full power to *feed, rule,* “ *and govern* the universal Church; as also is “ contained in the acts of general councils, and “ in the holy canons.”

On the authority of this decree, it is not wonderful that the most inordinate extent of power has often been claimed by the Popes,



and too often conceded to them. It is admitted by those who are most eager to soften the harsher features of the papal system, by Mr. C. Butler in particular, that the ultramontane doctrine, as it is called, the assertion of the Pope's right to supreme power, whether direct or indirect, in all the temporal concerns of states, the power of deposing sovereigns, of interfering with the rights and duties of subjects, may here find apparent support. That doctrine is not contradicted by any ecclesiastical authority; it is favoured at Rome;—and, everywhere else, it is tolerated by those who do not assent to it. We may be astonished at this; we may think it impossible for any, who dissent from a doctrine so pregnant with crime and mischief of the most gigantic kind, to esteem it worthy of toleration and endurance. But so it is: individuals may disclaim the doctrine for themselves, but, as we have already seen, they are not permitted to condemn it as contrary to religion.\*

\* Isaac Barrow expresses himself on this matter in the following unanswerable terms. “No man, apprehending it false, seemeth capable with good conscience to hold communion with those who profess it: for upon supposition of its falsehood, the Pope and his chief adherents are the teachers and abettors of the highest violation of divine commands, and the

In England there are, I doubt not, few individuals who persist in holding it; but that in Ireland there are millions, who, if their priests will teach it to them, are most ready to receive it, is unhappily a point equally clear. And what security have we, that the priests will forbear to teach it? If there be none, I think, Sir, that even you must admit, that this wide and indefinite tenet of the Pope's Supremacy, is both a valid and a strong objection against making further concessions to those who hold it.

But the case rests not here. History for centuries past proves, that while in England the more extravagant notion on this subject was gradually losing its hold on every class of the people, it did in fact retain its ground in

“ most enormous sins, of usurpation, tyranny, imposture, perjury, rebellion, murder, rapine, and all the villainies complicated in the practical influence of this doctrine. It seemeth clear, as the sun, that if this doctrine be an error, it is one of the most pernicious heresies ever invented, involving the highest impiety, and producing the greatest mischief. For, if he that should teach adultery, incest, simony, theft, murder, or the like crimes to be lawful, would be a heretick; how much more would he be such, that should recommend perjury, rebellion, regicide, (things including wars, confusions, slaughters, desolations, all sorts of injustice and mischief,) as duties? How then can any man safely hold communion with such persons?”—*Treatise of the Pope's Supremacy*, Introd. s. 6.

Ireland. Up to a very recent period, it has been maintained and acted upon there. Nay, at this very hour, by far the most shameless and audacious claim of papal power ever made, is admitted as a genuine and valid decree even by the Class-Book at Maynooth,—I mean the Bull of Boniface VIII. called *Unam Sanctam*.\*

This Bull, among other extravagancies, attributes to the Church, and the Pope its head, “two swords, the spiritual and the temporal—“the former to be used by the Church, the latter for it: the former by the sacerdotal, the latter by the regal and military hand, but at the nod and sufferance of the priest:—as Jeremiah says, *Lo, I have set thee, this day, over nations and kingdoms*. Therefore if the earthly power

\* Of this Bull, Dr. Doyle, *Essay on Catholic Claims*, p. 38, says, “that it never received the assent of the Church,” and yet it was not at all resisted out of France! “that it was recalled by Clement V. (see *Extravag. Meruit*),” and yet this very authority which he cites, instead of recalling, *recognizes* the Bull, while it grants, as a *particular privilege to France*, that no prejudices thence should arise to that kingdom or its sovereign. “*Meruit charissimi filii nostri Philippi, &c. sinceræ affectionis ad nos et Ecclesiam integritas;—meruit insuper regnicolorum puritas, &c. ut tam Regem quàm Regnum favore benevolo prosequamur. Hinc est, quòd nos Regi et regno per definitionem et declarationem bonæ memoriæ Bonifacii Papæ VIII., quæ incipit Unam Sanctam, nullum volumus vel intendimus præjudicium generari.*”

“ go wrong, it shall be judged by the spiritual;  
“ but the supreme power itself, by God alone.  
“ Moreover we declare, define, and pronounce,  
“ that *it is altogether a point necessary to salva-*  
“ *tion, for every creature to be subject to the*  
“ *Roman Pontiff.*”

This Bull, I repeat, is at this day held to be valid by the Class-Book at Maynooth; but in order to escape from the consequence of thereby establishing the direct power of the Pope in temporals, it says, that “ *by the special Provi-*  
“ *dence of God*, though in the recital Boniface  
“ had throughout spoken of the temporal power  
“ of kings being subject to the Church, yet,  
“ when he came to the defining and decreeing  
“ part of the Bull, he abstains from specifying  
“ temporals, and says, in general terms, to be  
“ *subject to the Roman Pontiff, which,*” it is added, “ every Catholic admits *in spirituals.*”\*

Such then is the doctrine now taught to the students who are training in the College at Maynooth for the ministry in Ireland, and those among them who shall follow their own common sense, (which, be it remembered, they are, in this particular, freely permitted to do,) and shall understand the Bull of Boniface accord-

\* Tract. de Ecc. p. 266.



ing to the plain meaning of the words, and the confessed intention of the writer, will here find a complete and infallible authority for preaching the supreme power of the Church in temporals in its fullest extent.

But supposing that matters be not carried so far, let us see what is necessarily connected with the Supremacy of the Pope even in spirituals. The decree of Florence calls him the Father and Teacher of all Christians, and ascribes to him the power to feed, and rule, and govern the Universal Church. He must, therefore, have a real and substantial jurisdiction, and authority, in every part of the Church, “a right,” as Dr. Milner expresses it, “of addressing his doctrinal instructions and ecclesiastical mandates to every portion of the Church; which mandates do not derive their authority from the acceptance of such portion of the Church; but if they are not opposed by the Church at large, they are to be received as coming from Christ himself.”\*

Among other instances of the exercise of this right, was the Bull *Unigenitus*, of which I have already said something; but it is necessary to make one or two remarks upon it here.

\* Eccl. Dem. detected, p. 98.

It is well known that the publication of this Bull, was only one of a series of measures devised at Rome, to counteract the effect of the Gallican Declaration of 1682. The condemnation of the 91st Proposition, which has been above noticed,\* was designed to bring the whole Church into the closest subjection to the Pope: for with this weapon he could annihilate, at his pleasure, all the obligations imposed by any laws, natural or divine. The great majority of the clergy of France were eager to concur with the Pope. Louis XIV., enfeebled in mind and body, was carried by his superstitious terrors, and by the influence of the Jesuits, into the same course. But the Parliament of Paris, to their immortal honour, refused to register the letters-patent accepting the Bull, without at the same time making an express provision, *inter alia*, against the obvious meaning of that part of it which relates to excommunication. “The arrêt of the Parliament, 15 Feb. 1714, “enregisters the letters-patent and the Constitution Unigenitus, but without approving “some of the decrees, not received in this “kingdom, enounced in the Constitution, &c.

\* See above, p. 50. The 91st *condemned* Proposition is, “That the fear of an unjust excommunication ought not to “deter us from doing our duty.”

“ and without permitting that the condemna-  
“ tion of the propositions which respect ex-  
“ communication shall prejudice the maxims  
“ and usages of the said kingdom, or that, under  
“ pretext of the said Constitution, in points  
“ respecting the fidelity and obedience due to  
“ the king, the observance of the laws of the  
“ state, and other real and certain duties, the  
“ fear of an unjust excommunication shall be  
“ suffered to hinder the subjects of the king  
“ from performing them.”

Now, Sir, this, I contend, and I am sure you will agree with me, is not an *explanation* of the Bull, as is intimated by Dr. Murray,\* but a *protestation* against it in those particulars in which it is inconsistent with the independence and safety of every government. It shows, that its obvious meaning was known and felt to be also its real meaning at the very time of its publication. And yet, in Ireland, this Bull, so pregnant with mischief, so ready an instrument of subjugating every one who admits its authority to the absolute dictation of his spiritual guide, is received and acknowledged without limitation or exception.

But the Bull Unigenitus was not the only

\* Commons, p. 648.

measure adopted at Rome to further its designs. The legend of St. Gregory VII. was another expedient; but this was so shameless and abominable, that it was universally\* scouted on the continent of Europe, and found a refuge only in the land of Saints. There *every Roman Catholic Priest is bound, under the penalty of mortal Sin, to read with due devotion the holy lessons of the day, containing the narrative of this heaven-born avenger of the Church's rights, this puller down and setter up of kings, to thank God for having given such a scourge to the world, and to call upon Him, in humble prayer, to grant that the "example may still edify and strengthen the Church."*

Even this is not all. About the same time (in the year 1712) the canonization of Pius V., begun long before, was finally completed. This Saint, too, is worshipped in Ireland and in England; but what were the high virtues, "the *heroic degree of charity,*" (such Mr. Butler tells us is requisite in this case,) which raised him to the celestial glory, and entitled him to the thankful commemoration, nay, to the worship and adoration, of the subjects of the British Crown? My readers will scarcely believe me,

\* It has since been admitted into the Spanish Breviary.



when I say, that it was, among other things, his “unhesitating zeal in striking with his  
 “dread anathema the impious heretic Eliza-  
 “beth, the pretended Queen of England, the  
 “slave of shameful vices, as a heretic, and the  
 “favourer of Heretics, absolving her subjects  
 “from their allegiance, and depriving herself,  
 “by Pontifical authority, of her pretended right  
 “to the throne of England.” These things are  
 expressed in these very terms in the Bull of  
 Canonization; and the Bull, moreover, com-  
 mended the example of Pius as an object of  
*imitation to every Bishop.*

Sir, I must think that a claim to supremacy, such as this, acknowledged and acted upon by all the ecclesiastics in communion with Rome,—entering into, and directing, their devotions—hallowed by association with all that is most sacred in their religion,—is not a matter to be treated with contempt.

But there yet remains an observation on this point too important to be omitted. No Englishman will deny, that cases may be put, when, in the exercise of the most awful responsibility that can be incurred, subjects are bound by their duty to God, to themselves and their posterity, to rise against their lawful sovereign, and assert those rights which tyranny would annihilate.

Now, the doctrine of the Pope's supremacy tells us, that the power of determining when this awful moment is arrived belongs to the Church. Such not only was the language of Allen,\* and others, but it is the language of living Roman Catholics, especially of one of the most truly liberal of his communion; one, who viewed the tyranny and usurpations of the Pope with abhorrence, and whose manly resistance to the arrogant pretensions of the modern Church of Rome, drew down upon him the indignation and censures of his superiors,—I mean Dr. O'Connor: even he, (and if he, all

\* “What, after all, was that deposing power, with the  
“mention of which we are so much stunned, and the asserting  
“of which is supposed to be of such a heavy charge against  
“our early Divines? Did these learned men ascribe to the  
“Pope a higher civil, or temporal, authority in the kingdoms  
“of other Princes? This is what Protestants and ill-instructed  
“and prejudiced Catholics suppose. But this is a gross error.”  
“What then did they say, except what all Protestants have  
“said, that a manifest grievous persecution of the community,  
“for conscience sake, is an intolerable act of tyranny? The  
“whole difference is, that the Catholics of those times, instead  
“of deciding for themselves on so important and conscientious  
“a business, as Protestants in general claimed a right to do,  
“only then judged the case lawful, when an impartial and  
“equitable arbiter, the Ecclesiastical Superior, decided that it  
“was so, as Cardinal Allen argues.”—*Eccl. Dem. detected*,  
p. 197.

others, we may be sure,) affirms a principle directly tending to the violation of the sworn duty of the subject, and to the dependence of the Crown on the decisions of a foreign Pontiff. Thus he writes,\* “ There is but one difference “ in this respect between the genuine doctrine “ of Catholics and Protestants, and that is explained by an historical fact, applying to the “ obligation of an oath. If oaths were to be “ immutably and eternally binding, there never “ could have been a revolution in England “ without perjury; for all magistrates and officers of the army and navy had taken the “ Oath of Allegiance to James II. But there “ is a time when oaths *cease to be binding*, and “ when that time comes, the Protestant declares “ himself dispensed from their obligation. That “ time did come, when James’s tyrannical “ government rendered that government intolerable to the English people, and then the “ officers of the army and navy declared “ themselves dispensed from the obligation of “ their Oath. Now, in similar circumstances, “ a Catholic officer would pause. True, he “ would say, it appears to me, that I am now “ acquitted from all obligation of allegiance;

\* Columbanus, No. I. p. 36.

“ but perhaps I judge too favourably in my  
“ own cause, and *I will submit it to the judgment*  
“ *of the Church*, whether I am, under these cir-  
“ cumstances, absolved from my allegiance, or  
“ not. The Church then only pronounces us  
“ absolved from our oaths, when their obliga-  
“ tion has already ceased.” (But then the  
*Church* has authority to *pronounce* that their  
obligation has ceased : and this, in truth, is the  
marrow of the whole.) “ No Pope, no Council,  
“ can *absolve* or *dispense*, so long as the nature  
“ and *circumstances of the Oath are the same.*”

Now, Sir, can any government be safe, if its subjects are thus at liberty to apply to any authority, foreign or domestic, to ascertain whether, and when, their duty of allegiance has ceased ? Certainly, the danger is not lessened, but greatly increased, by that authority being ecclesiastical ; for a sacredness is thus thrown about it, which makes its responses infinitely more venerable and convincing, than any merely human sanctions could ever give. But the consideration of greatest moment in the account is this—that there is a specific quarter, to which resort may be had for the solution of the doubt. This must facilitate the application for the solution, and still more must facilitate and encourage the growth of the doubt itself. Where the



conscience of the individual must decide, if he be indeed conscientious, he will, of course, be so deeply impressed with the sacredness of the obligation, under which his oath has laid him, that he will be eager to keep down every nascent surmise unfavourable to his sworn allegiance:—nothing but the strongest and most palpable case of tyranny will overcome his honest scruples. But if there be an Ecclesiastical Superior, who can authoritatively pronounce on the validity of his surmise, he feels himself quite at liberty to give it a full and free vent: to communicate it to that superior, and in communicating to set it forth in the strongest colours, and so to confirm and augment its native force. Besides, if there were no external quarter to which to have recourse for solution of such doubts, every individual must be inclined to keep them to himself, until the case be of so grave and overpowering a necessity, as to unite the whole mass of the people in one common feeling.

On all these, as well as other accounts, the doctrine of the Supremacy of the Pope is one which must make every wise legislature, particularly every Protestant legislature, cautious how they increase the power of those who hold it. And can this seem of little moment, when

Irish Roman Catholic Bishops—who, to the mass of their people, must appear to speak with authority scarcely less sacred than that of the Pope himself—are describing an intolerable tyranny as even now exercised by the Government of their own land?

VI. Would that we heard such sentiments from them only! Is it possible, that you could deliberately permit yourself to give the high sanction of your example to language so violent and inflammatory? that you should be one of the prime instigators to insurrection and rebellion? Sir, I ask these questions, because if there be any one cause, which, more than another, will justify resistance to established Government, it is religious persecution—yet this is precisely the act of tyranny, which you are pleased to lay to the charge of the Government of this land.

“ It was said, as another objection to the  
“ concession of any political power to the  
“ (Roman) Catholics, that they were, in Ire-  
“ land, under the guidance of men whom they  
“ regarded with veneration bordering on ido-  
“ latry. He admitted the fact; but he laid  
“ the blame on another quarter. If they were  
“ idolatrous in their devotion to their priests,  
“ we were to blame; if they bowed down be-

“ fore Idols, it was our *persecution* which set  
 “ them up.” Sir, I hold it extremely unfair, to  
 weigh in very nice scales the words which an  
 orator may let fall in the ardour of debate and  
 under the impulse of excited feelings. I should  
 be ashamed of myself, if I could catch at a  
 single insulated phrase, however intemperate,  
 and make it the subject of captious criticism,  
 much more of affected indignation. But, un-  
 happily, in the present instance, there is no-  
 thing in the whole course of your speech to  
 redeem the imprudence of this most dangerous  
 expression. On the contrary, there is much  
 to aggravate its mischief, and to give to it the  
 air of genuine and deliberate choice. “ Could  
 “ it be expected,” you demand, “ that the  
 “ Catholics would rest contented under the  
 “ stigma of their present numerous political  
 “ disabilities? Was it to be imagined, that  
 “ they would go about without repining at  
 “ *those badges of degradation which the penal*  
 “ *code hung about them?*” “ Could Ireland be  
 “ allowed to remain in her present state; or  
 “ would it be wise, or politic, to call on her to  
 “ bow down and worship *that Constitution from*  
 “ *the benefits of which she was excluded?*”

Charges such as these, idle, and, I had  
 almost, said, contemptible as they are in them-

selves, acquire a real and grave importance, when it is remembered from what quarter they proceed. I must, therefore, submit to the mortifying task of defending our Laws and Government from the reproaches with which you are pleased to vilify them. I shall do this, not by argument—that would be too mortifying,—but by testimony, the testimony of those whom you have held forth to us, as the miserable victims of oppression and persecution.

Dr. Troy, in a pastoral letter dated Dublin, 25th May, 1798, makes a warm and handsome eulogy on the large share of civil, political, and religious rights with which the Roman Catholics were now legally invested. But another prelate, Dr. Moylan, expresses the same sentiments so much better, that I would prefer making use of his words. “I would have “you,” says he, addressing the Roman Catholics of his diocese, Cork, 16th April, 1798, “I “would have you not unmindful of the blessings you enjoy, and the favours you have received : certain privileges excepted, *you possess the advantages of the Constitution. The “penal laws* under which our fathers groaned, “*have been almost all done away.* (Really this is by anticipation an answer to the very letter of all you have thought fit to say on this subject.)



“ You have the comfort of exercising your holy  
 “ religion without controul; and to the be-  
 “ nignity of government and the liberality of  
 “ Parliament, we are indebted for the establish-  
 “ ment and endowment of a Roman Catholic  
 “ College, on an extensive plan, which will  
 “ afford a liberal education to our youth, and  
 “ a supply of clergy to our Church, when the  
 “ present generation have finished their career.”  
 (Horrible persecution!) “ *These are favours*  
 “ *that should excite and call out all our gratitude ;*  
 “ and this gratitude we should evince by a  
 “ *steady attachment to the Constitution* and un-  
 “ shaken loyalty to our gracious Sovereign,—a  
 “ sovereign, who has done more for the Roman  
 “ Catholic Body, and, indeed, for this kingdom  
 “ in general, than any or all of his pre-  
 “ decessors.”

You, Sir, will not be able to read language such as this, without deploring the lamentable degradation, to which the existing penal code had thirty years ago reduced its victims; they were, it seems, so far debased by it, that they could even hug their chains, and fancy themselves happy, till Mr. O’Connell, and Mr. Cobbett, and Mr. Canning, (have we lived to witness the association?) in the overflowing torrent of their benevolence, have kindly assured them

that they are perfectly miserable. To call on Ireland to value the Constitution, in her present state, is, according to you, “to suppose her either utterly incapable of appreciating the benefits of *emancipation*,” (shade of William Pitt! does he who calls himself your disciple, dare so to abuse that word?) “or altogether unworthy of it.” And yet, Sir, so late as the 16th of March, 1821, you were yourself so insensible to the wrongs of that injured country, that you could thus speak of the condition in which the laws have placed her. “From that time (1774) the system was progressively mitigated, until the year 1793, which *crowned and consummated the gift of civil liberty, and left only political concession imperfect.*”

But why do I dwell on the testimony of words—even your own recorded words,—to confute this unseemly charge against the laws and constitution of your country. Let me rather look to what ought to be, and, I doubt not, really is, a surer evidence of your genuine sentiments than any words can afford—I mean, the tenor of your public life.

For twelve years after the first mootings of this question in 1800, not once did we hear from you any remonstrance on the *persecution* of Ireland. On the contrary, though your

mind was made up as to the expediency of satisfying her moderate claims, under real and efficient restrictions, yet you never, during that whole period, gave to those claims even the benefit of your silent vote, but were repeatedly numbered in the ranks opposed to them. When in 1807 our late revered King, acting under the genuine influence of a righteous conscience, deprived his old age of the counsels of a ministry whose talents he could not but respect, and some of whose members he always regarded with warm and confiding attachment,—when, at that crisis of his earthly hopes and comforts, he cast himself on the love and loyalty of his people, and called on them to sustain him in the defence, as he avouched it to be, of the Protestant Religion and the ancient Constitution of his country,—you, Sir, were among the foremost to answer to his call. You gave to him the full benefit of your powerful services, and thus largely contributed to the triumph of that very cause, which you now think proper to designate by the name of persecution.

Do I blame you for this? do I cast it in your teeth? No, Sir, I honour you for your manly firmness in standing by your good old King, when he was beset with difficulty and danger, when, for the first time since the downfall of the

Monarchy in 1648, he was arraigned for his own personal acts before the tribunal of Parliament, when he could offer to his servants nothing but the prospect of an arduous and most doubtful struggle, of short-lived honours, and of mortifying, though not inglorious, defeat. That you sought the invidious eminence to which you were then raised, I do not believe; I believe, rather, that in accepting office, under such circumstances, you yielded to a sense of public duty, to that just confidence in a good cause, which "makes ambition virtue," which gives courage even to the timid, but nerves the manly spirit to a tone of vigorous and energetic action, commensurate with the high exigence which calls it forth. But, Sir, while I honour you sincerely, and from my heart, for your conduct on that trying occasion, it is only on the supposition, that, however you might differ from your Sovereign's judgment, you were satisfied that his scruple was worthy of your respect. Such it could not have been, had you deemed it to be founded on injustice and persecution. In that case, it would have been your duty to him, no less than to yourself, to have declined his services, to have remonstrated against his prepossessions, to have told him, that, while you honoured his sincerity, you were bound to warn



him of the unrighteous and unholy end of all his solicitude.

Such, Sir, must have been your conduct, had you then entertained the opinion of this question, which you now proclaim.—You would not have waited till your sovereign's virtual decease,—till you no longer were his minister,—to call on Parliament to perform this tardy act of justice to your *persecuted* countrymen,\*—nor

\* I am tempted to add the following testimony of the persecuted state of the Irish.

MR. GRATTAN.—“ If you want to form a judgment of the character and capacities of Ireland, look to what she has effected in the short space of twenty-five years. In that short period, the people added one-third to her commerce, increased her revenue five-fold, gave an accession of one-third to her population, and have besides acquired a *free trade*, and a *free constitution*. These are the barbarous accomplishments of Ireland. The Catholics of Ireland have a trial by jury—are *admissible to all offices, but the highest offices in the state*, but, above all, are a constituent part of the country,—these are the rights which they possess, and these rights they would not surrender to the kings of England, nor will they surrender them to an enemy. These facts afford the best proof of the highly civilized and improved state of Ireland, and afford the *best picture of that brave people*, who have been so cruelly stigmatized.” — Parl. Deb. May 25th, 1808, p. 570.

MR. CANNING.—“ The Roman Catholics of Ireland are a loyal people: and they share with all their countrymen the

would you, as you did in 1813, have rejected every other solace of their misery, every other relief from the cruel bondage in which millions were holden, because the great and opulent few among them were refused a seat in our Protestant Legislature.

But I have dwelt too long on this—let me

“ qualities of generosity of heart, and warmth of feeling,  
 “ and deep sensibility to kindness. They cannot, therefore,  
 “ but acknowledge their obligations to a sovereign, whose  
 “ reign, a contrast therein to that of his predecessors, has been  
 “ one continued series of concessions and relaxations in their  
 “ favour ; and if those concessions and relaxations had arrived  
 “ at a point, beyond which not the policy, but the conscience  
 “ of the monarch would not suffer him to go, they would  
 “ surely have respected in him those rights of conscience,  
 “ which they claim for themselves,” &c.

After describing the penal system—“ Such was the system,  
 “ to which we gave a trial. Happily it failed, and we have  
 “ come back from this barbarous system to one of good policy  
 “ and of humanity. We have acknowledged the erroneous  
 “ severity of our ancestors, by the successive repeal of much  
 “ the greater part of the code, which pressed upon our Catholic  
 “ fellow-subjects. We have done this : and have we any  
 “ reason to repent of it ? *Has not the growth of Irish pros-*  
 “ *perity kept pace with that of Catholic happiness and freedom ?*

“ I am willing to agree with you, that we have gone so far,  
 “ that *we ought not to proceed further*, without such securities,  
 “ as may be reasonably required, and as are necessary for the  
 “ preservation of our own Protestant Establishments.”—Parl.  
 Deb. April 24th, 1812, p. 1031.

turn to the consequence which you ascribe to this bitter persecution.—“ It has made the “ Roman Catholic people of Ireland the idolatrous worshippers of their Priests.”

Sir, Doctor Moylan has told us that four and thirty years ago every thing of what he deemed persecution, even in theory, had ceased: in practice, it had ceased before. But during this long period, the power of the Priesthood has not been shaken, — till within the last few months, when another sort of persecution has commenced, a persecution which Dr. Doyle has gravely proclaimed to be more intolerable than the penal code in all its matured severity, I mean the persecution of reason, and the diffusion of the Scriptures. It is plain, therefore, that the cause, which you assign, cannot be the real one. But did you ever trouble yourself to inquire, whether there be anything in the Roman Catholic system itself, which will account for the wonderful empire held by the Priesthood over the understanding and feelings of their people, wherever, as in Ireland, that system is counteracted by no external cause, but is permitted to act with full and unimpaired activity? If not, you will not, perhaps, be sorry, to be presented with some particulars here.

I will not carry you back to distant ages, nor

harass you with a disquisition on the canons of ancient councils—my authorities shall be all of the present day, taken from books of high reputation among the living members of the Church of Rome.

The very first principle of that Church is, that not the Scriptures of God, but “the teaching authority of the successors of the Apostles” (so it is expressed by Mr. Berington\*) is “the rule of its Faith.” These successors of the Apostles are, as I need not inform you, the Bishops; but you probably are not aware, that they are regarded as of *equal authority with the Apostles themselves*. Dr. Baines, Bishop of Siga, the present Vicar Apostolic of the Western District, in a sermon which he preached and published only last year, has the following passage:—“With respect to the Apostles themselves, you will readily admit, that there was “an obligation of believing *their* doctrines. “Would any of you have ventured to contradict St. Paul to his face? to tell him, that “you did not understand the Bible in the sense “he taught, and that you had a right to explain “its meaning for yourselves? Would he have “acquiesced in your claims? Would he not “rather have pronounced upon you the anathe-

\* “Faith of Catholics,” &c. by Berington and Kirke, 1813.



“ma, which he declared he would pronounce  
“even upon an Angel from Heaven, who should  
“teach doctrines different from those which he  
“had preached? But why, let me ask, should  
“the Apostles be entitled to an obedience,  
“which is refused to their successors? The  
“Catholic Church believes, that the *same* sub-  
“mission is due to the lawful successors of the  
“Apostles in the first, the second, and the nine-  
“teenth century, as was due *to the Apostles*  
“*themselves.*” In conformity to this doctrine,  
they are held to be, in such a sense, the autho-  
ritative Interpreters of Scripture, that no one  
may follow the light of his own understanding  
against any of their declared interpretations.  
If the Church were to declare it to be accord-  
ing to Scripture, that an heretical monarch  
should be deposed, its members would be bound  
to believe, that such is the doctrine of Scrip-  
ture, though they might be unable to discern\*  
it there.

\* Mr. O’Sullivan in his evidence before the Commons, p. 462, gives the following account of a conversation he had held with a Roman Catholic gentleman of considerable intelligence:—  
“I said to him, suppose that the Pope and Council announced  
“that the King of England was a person that should be dé-  
“posed, would you feel in conscience bound, as a Roman Ca-  
“tholic, to obey? He answered, certainly not, *because it would*

In accordance with the same principle, the Scriptures themselves are held to be not only no more than a part, but also by no means a necessary part, of the word of God. Thus writes Mr. Berington—"We are not at liberty  
 "to think, that the truths preached by the  
 "Apostles would not have remained, to the end  
 "of the world, pure and unaltered, had it never  
 "seemed good to any of those apostolic men,  
 "as it did to St. Luke, to commit to writing  
 "what they had learned."\* And Dr. Milner says, "The Christian doctrine and discipline  
 "might have been propagated and preserved  
 "by the unwritten word, or tradition, joined  
 "with the authority of the Church, *though the*  
 "*Scriptures had not been composed.*"† As a consequence of this, "the Catholic reader will now  
 "be sensible," says Mr. Berington, "should  
 "any point of his belief seem to receive little  
 "support, or even no support, from any text

*be contrary to Scripture.* I asked, whether he or his Church  
 "was to be the judge of Scripture, he said, his Church. Then,  
 "I asked, *if the decree was so worded, that the Pope and Council*  
 "*affirmed it to be not contrary to, but according to Scripture,*  
 "that an heretical monarch should be deposed, how would you  
 "act? *He admitted that he would feel himself bound by the de-*  
 "*cree, because it was for the Pope to judge of Scripture, and*  
 "that, as a Roman Catholic, *he should obey him.*"

\* P. xiv.

† End of Controversy, p. 82.

“ of Scripture, that *its truth is not thereby*  
“ *affected,*” (he must mean, the duty of believing it to be true,) “ as its divine origin from  
“ Christ, and its descent from the Apostles,  
“ remain the same.” If a person should conclude that “ such an article rested not on authority equally strong with another, which  
“ has numerous proofs from Scripture in its  
“ favour, *he would palpably err as a Catholic.*”  
p. viii.

That in a country, where these principles are allowed their free sway, the Scriptures should be neglected, and in many instances utterly unknown, is only a matter of course. Mr. Donelan, a Roman Catholic gentleman, nephew of Lord Fingal, one of the Inspectors of the Kildare Place Schools, states in his evidence\* before the Commissioners of Education, “ that the  
“ peasantry could scarcely distinguish between  
“ a Testament and any other book of the same  
“ size on a religious subject; that in Connaught  
“ *the peasant does not know what a Bible or Testament is.*” “ I think (he adds) we may say, in  
“ general, they do not understand that the  
“ Bible contains the Word of God, the History  
“ of Our Saviour, the History of the Creation,  
“ and the Redemption of the World.”

\* P. 488.

Another witness\* informs the Commissioners, that he “ had met with a great many who never “ saw or heard of the Scriptures; some did not “ know what he was speaking about, when “ speaking of the Bible; at last they cried, Oh “ yes, you are speaking about the *Black Book*. “ Some of them think that *Luther was the author “ of it.*” “ In an investigation, which occupied “ nearly three whole days, (says Mr. Gordon,†) “ during which I entered as many cabins as “ that time would admit, only one copy of the “ Scriptures was found, a Protestant Testa- “ ment, that belonged to a child in attendance “ on a Protestant school; the *persons in the “ cabin were afraid to touch it; they handed it “ down upon a board—because they thought it “ an heretical book.*”

That this ignorance is encouraged by the Church of Rome as highly serviceable to its interests, is manifest not merely from the Encyclical Letter of the Pope, to which I have already referred,‡ but also from the conduct of the Priests, as narrated in the evidence before these Commissioners:—“ One lad, of nineteen, told me,” says Captain Pringle, “ if we read that “ black book, the Priest tells me we shall be

\* Captain George Pringle, p. 686.

† P. 716.

‡ See above, p. 68.



“ visited with thunder and lightning.” “ The Roman Catholic Clergy,” says another witness,\* “ have denounced the Irish Scriptures “ from the altar in Kerry and Meath, and have “ called our New Testament, because it is in “ some instances bound in black, the *Black Book*, “ and have produced it as such in its black “ coat, connecting it with *the powers of darkness*.”

So much for the rule of Faith in the Church of Rome, and the ignorance which it has in itself a tendency to produce, and does, in fact, produce in Ireland. A corollary from this principle, is the duty of *implicit faith*: I mean that men should be ready to believe every tenet which the Church holds, whether they understood it or not, nay, whether their reason assents to it or not. “ The body of the faithful,” says Mr. Gandolphy,† “ are essentially disqualified from “ judging of points of doctrine,—in quality of

\* H. M. Mason, Esq. p. 746.

† Vol. iv. p. 307. I have before said, that at Rome Mr. Gandolphy's volumes are pronounced, *by authority*, to be worthy of being “ cased in cedar and gold.” I now add, that they were at the same time characterized as a work “ truly worthy “ of a Catholic Missioner, eminently calculated to confirm Catholics in their faith, as well as to bring back to the bosom of “ our holy Mother, the Church, those who are gone astray.”

“ sheep, *in their state of dependence*, they are to  
“ be enlightened by the Shepherd of the flock.  
“ *Thus none can ever err.*” “ A Catholic finds  
“ not more difficulty in assenting to any truth  
“ the Church proposes to him, as an article of  
“ faith, than he would in admitting *the oral tes-*  
“ *timony of God himself!*”\* “ If you say, we  
“ know you are of the Mother Church, and  
“ come in a direct line of succession from the  
“ Apostles, yet we cannot consent to receive  
“ your doctrine as the word of God,—I insist,  
“ my brethren, that you are not aware, that, by  
“ this conduct, you transfer to yourselves the  
“ whole of that *responsibility which attaches to*  
“ *your Pastors:* and why *unnecessarily consent to*  
“ *carry a burthen*, which God had exclusively  
“ laid on their shoulders. If you erred before,  
“ *the sin was their's*,—and why make it, your  
“ own? *Only called upon to follow*, (who hears  
“ you hears me, says Jesus Christ,) the justice  
“ of Heaven would not condemn your involun-  
“ tary error of obedience. Whereas, if you  
“ undertake to judge for your pastors, you  
“ obviously resist the messengers of Christ—  
“ and if wrongly,—and God is my witness you  
“ would very wrongly,—what a weight of re-

\* Vol. i. p. 197.

“sponsibility would you carry with you to the  
 “judgment-seat of Christ?”\* Nor is this limited to points of faith—“The exercise of  
 “*moral virtues*,” Mr. Gandolphy tells his people,  
 “must be regulated, as we regulate our faith,  
 “by submission to the approbation of the  
 “Church.”†

And here another most important source of power to the Priesthood, is presented to our view. At least once in every year every Roman Catholic must, under the penalty of mortal sin, give an account of his moral conduct, confess all his offences to his spiritual pastor, and await at his lips the sentence of pardon, or the awful declaration that his sins are still retained. I will not dwell on so plain a matter; but will content myself with citing from the Class Book at Maynooth a passage, which will prove, beyond the power of comment to heighten its effect, the hideous excess to which the ministers of that Church in Ireland are *taught* to extend their claims on the awe and reverence of the people. It is an acknowledged principle that “whatever a Priest knows, in the way of  
 “confession, he knows it not as man, but as  
 “acting *the part of Christ himself*.” Hence,

\* Vol. i. p. 232. Compare this passage cited above, p. 53.

† Vol. ii. 103.

“ the following maxim has the unanimous *assent*  
 “ *of all divines*. If a priest be questioned by a  
 “ magistrate, respecting matters of which he  
 “ has had knowledge only from confession, he  
 “ *ought* to answer that he knows them not,  
 “ nay, even *to swear* that he does not; and, in  
 “ doing this he is in no danger of lying. The  
 “ reason is (*juxta Estium*) because he does not  
 “ lie, nor equivocate, who answers according  
 “ to the mind of the person, who questions  
 “ him, and advances nothing but the truth; but  
 “ this is the case of the priests under such cir-  
 “ cumstances, for he is not questioned by the  
 “ judge, as to what he knows by way of con-  
 “ fession, *as he bears the part of God*, quatenus  
 “ *Dei vices agit*, but what he knows, as man,  
 “ and therefore out of confession.”\*

\* De Pœn. p. 286. I must here add what follows. “ But  
 “ if the Judge presses further, and specially asks, whether he  
 “ knows this from confession, some say, that the answer of the  
 “ Priest, even upon oath, ought still to be the same, that he  
 “ knows it not, because the Judge, whether he will or not,  
 “ *cannot* ask the Confessor a question, *except as he is man*.  
 “ But the more common opinion, and that which should be  
 “ observed in practice is, that in such circumstances the Con-  
 “ fessor must say, that he cannot give any answer to this ques-  
 “ tion.” The reason is (a most curious one, not that he will  
 thus avoid perjuring himself, but) “ that this answer alone  
 “ consults at once for the seal of Confession, and the reverence  
 “ of the Sacrament.”



Of confession I will say no more. Of *absolution* I will repeat, that the actual reception of it is deemed absolutely necessary for the salvation of a sinner, unless he have *perfect contrition*, in which case his wish for the sacrament will suffice; but then, as I have already said, no penitent can know of himself, whether his contrition be indeed perfect,—this can be pronounced only by the Priest. As Dr. Baines, in the sermon cited by me before, distinctly says, “The Catholic Church requires that the sinner “confess his guilt to the minister of religion, “in order that the latter may ascertain, whether his penitent *possess the requisite qualifications.*” So entirely, therefore, is the everlasting happiness of the people placed at the mercy of the Priests. In connection with the security of the state, it is important to add, that this very Class Book for the instruction of the Irish Priesthood, tells them, that there is nothing in the nature of the sacrament, which prevents the Priest from absolving persons from sins, *in which he himself has been an accomplice*:—that Benedict XIV. did indeed order that in one class of sins, those against the sixth Commandment (our seventh) no Priest should absolve, except in articulo mortis, a person

with whom he has himself been guilty.\* But this very order proves, if proof be necessary, that in all other cases, even *murder, rebellion, and treason*, they retain the power:—a most satisfactory hearing to any Protestant Government, who has reason to suspect the loyalty of its Roman Catholic Clergy.

Sir, I must not wholly omit to notice the power of excommunication as one of the most efficacious causes and instruments of the tyranny of the Irish Priesthood. Excommunication, I need not say, is a sentence of absolute exclusion from all the rites and sacraments of the Church—and that, in the estimation of every sincere member of the Church of Rome, it is therefore an absolute exclusion from the means of grace, and from the hopes of Heaven.

This sentence cannot, according to the principles of that Church, be pronounced by any but the Bishop, or delegate of the Bishop. Yet in Ireland the parish Priests are continually in the habit of exercising a power short of formal excommunication, but which has almost equal effect on the terrified minds of the people; and, what is not less worthy of remark, the Bishops are in the habit of contemplating the exercise

\* P. 262.

of this power in perfect silence.\* It is called "the Priest's curse."

I am not ignorant, that in the examination† of Drs. Murray, Kelly and Doyle, before the Commissioners of Education Enquiry, all those Prelates denied most solemnly, that this phrase was familiar to them. By what process they enabled themselves to give this answer, is more than I can presume to guess. That the practice is common, whatever become of the name, may be elicited from that very examination itself.

\* P. 783.

† There is some matter so curious in this examination, that I must extract it:—Dr. Doyle had said "that if any Priest under his direction had done so, he should reprimand him in the most severe terms for abusing his office; for our duty is to bless and not to curse." Presently, he thinks better of this answer, and, for the ease of his conscience, informs his examiners, that a Priest of his had once written to him apprising him of his having prohibited some great scandal under the pain of the curse of God.—*I did not reprehend that Priest*, says Dr. Doyle, *for he appeared to be conscious of having acted with a degree of impropriety*, and I thought the feeling existing in his mind was a sufficient security against his doing so again. Did the letter convey to you the impression that the Priest was himself sensible he had erred in what he had done?—He was under the impression, that I might learn it, and would reprimand him probably with severity, &c. as to whether he thought he was doing wrong, I cannot say. As far as his flock is con-

Dr. Doyle is asked—Do you not believe it is common in many parts of Ireland, that that does take place from the altars on the part of the Priest, as applied to the people? and he answers thus—*I should fear too often.* But on this subject we have other testimony, and of the most respectable kind, that of Mr. Donelan, the same Roman Catholic gentleman whom I have cited before. “When a person is said to “be cursed from the altar, does it mean an “announcement of the intention of refusing “those rites (absolution, churching women, “sacraments to the dying)?”—“*A curse is “something beyond that; what the poor people*

cerned, they are still in ignorance, whether it was with your approbation?—My flock know me too well to suppose I would approve of it. They do not know of the letter he has written to you, showing his feeling on the subject?—They are in ignorance of that, I suppose; but if such a proceeding were repeated, they know that they should meet with redress, on making application to me. How can they know that?—Because they know in many instances, that where they had any reasonable complaint of the conduct of a clergyman, on representing it to me, I have always interfered. But this having occurred, and no complaint having been made by the parishioners to you, how are they aware that you would interfere?—I think *the thing is so wrong in its own nature, that it must strike almost any Christian, that I disapprove of a Priest, appointed to minister between the people and God, converting his ministry into a curse.*



conceive of *the curse of the Priest*" (this layman, it seems, is familiar with the phrase, whatever may be the ignorance of the Archbishops, as stated by them *upon oath*) "is, that *it will bring down the vengeance of Heaven in every respect*; the vulgar expression is, that *they will have neither luck nor grace.*"\* Captain Pringle,† and Mr. Gordon,‡ give instances, which fell within their own knowledge of preternatural effects ascribed to the curse of the Priest.

But if the sworn testimony of Drs. Murray and Kelly could have been sufficient to induce a doubt of the existence of this practice, that doubt has been removed by the history of the last few months. Mr. Maxwell, in his printed address to the Electors of the County of Cavan, thus appeals to the testimony of their own senses—"You beheld the Roman Catholic pastors march into the County Town at the head of their respective flocks. *You heard them denouncing eternal damnation* against every one who withheld his support from their favourite candidate;" and Lord George Beresford makes this one of the grounds of his protest at the Waterford Election, "that the freedom of

\* P. 494.

† p. 703.

‡ p. 718

“ election was grossly violated by intimidation  
“ and threats of ecclesiastical censures, and  
“ of excommunication, used by the Catholic  
“ Clergy at this election, &c. and *by the actual*  
“ *excommunication* of several freeholders on ac-  
“ count of voting for him.”\*

Yet, notwithstanding the notoriety of these and other similar proceedings, we have not heard of a single instance, in which any one of these Clergy was called to account by his ecclesiastical superiors for what Dr. Doyle has designated as “a thing so wrong in its own nature, “ that it must strike every Christian,” namely, “ that a Priest, appointed to minister between “ the people and God, should convert his ministry into a curse.” And while the bishops have thus looked on in silence, the laity, even in England, have given their sanction to this exercise of spiritual authority in temporal matters, by returning solemn thanks to them for their exemplary zeal and services.

\* It is curious, but painful, to remark the uniformity of conduct which, at almost all periods, has been preserved by the Roman Catholic Clergy in Ireland. In the reign of James I., at a time of great excitement, a new parliament was summoned, and Leland tells us, that “ the Clergy preached the “ cause of religion, and denounced their excommunications on “ those, who should presume to vote against the friends of the “ Roman Catholic Church.”—i. 446.

But, Sir, the utmost extent of power claimed by them, and reverence addressed to them, does not exceed the fair and reasonable inferences from the principles of their Church. Mr. Gandolphy, in the work for which he has received so flattering testimonies of approbation from Rome, thus speaks of the dignity of his Priesthood. “Fifty thousand Bethsamites were  
 “ slain in one day, for failing to show due respect to the Ark; and Oza fell dead before it, for venturing to touch it with a profane hand. If such was the awful respect exacted by God towards what were only the figures of our institution, mark the high consideration in which you ought to hold the living Priests of the eternal God.” “Like the virgins mentioned in the Apocalypse, they attend him wherever he goes; they form his royal court upon earth, and the ministry of his throne; *they are the chosen guardians of his person,\** possess the deposit of his blood, and hold the mystic keys of his everlasting kingdom. The Priest of Jesus Christ walks among men a miracle of grace—is the rock that pours forth water to the fainting—the manna that yields bread to the hungry—the bush

\* Such is the good account to which the doctrine of Transubstantiation is turned.

“that burns without being consumed.” (iv. 112.) “My brethren, to the reflecting mind this  
“ministry must surely present something *divinely sacred*, and appears more worthy the  
“nature of angels than of men. It exalts  
“them above all for which human life had designed them—makes them the agents of God,  
“the vicegerents of Jesus Christ, and the *saviours of men*. In this point of view, it ranks them  
“even above the angelic spirits, and clothes them  
“with the divine character of the Messiah himself.”  
“These distinctions, however, arising from the  
“sacerdotal ministry, *exclusively belong to the*  
“*Priesthood of the Catholic Church.*”—117.

Such, Sir, is the language of a work, pronounced by the highest authorities at Rome to be “truly worthy of a Catholic Missioner”—a work, “which not only merits approbation, but  
“entitles its author to a return of thanks and  
“every encouragement to promote his labour  
“in cultivating the vineyard of the Lord.” The feelings of the mass of the Roman Catholics of Ireland seem to be in pretty strict accordance with the lofty pretensions, which this champion of their Church sets forth: and every day brings us some fresh instance of their eagerness to advance the worldly greatness of their spiritual guides.



It is not long ago since a Bill was brought into Parliament, and passed into a law, empowering the Roman Catholic Clergy to use their own rites of burial in the churchyards of the Established Church, on observing the lightest condition that was consistent with the very principles of any establishment. Of this measure, Mr. Plunket, in recommending it to Parliament, declared that “it was a charter of toleration, for which the (Roman) Catholics ought and would be grateful.” What was the consequence? The Bill was no sooner passed, the boon was no sooner conferred, than it was scorned and spurned: it is at this day become a by-word to the demagogues in Dublin, of all orders, lay and episcopal. And this, though the Head of their own Church, the venerated Pius VII. denounced the tolerant principle in Napoleon’s Code, “*That all modes of religious worship be free and publicly exercised,*” as contrary to the Canons, to the Councils, and to the Catholic Religion, to the tranquillity of life, and to the happiness of the State.

We have since seen an open attempt, in one of the principal parishes in Dublin, to deprive the Protestant Vicar of what is at once his privilege and his duty, the presidency at the Vestry Meeting, and to give to a Roman Catholic

Priest an equality of right with him. An eagerness in trifles such as this, proves the animus of the parties as strongly as endeavours after greater objects.

That many, indeed, or most of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, do look to the destruction of the Protestant Establishment, and the exaltation of their own Church, as a necessary consequence of the unconditional concessions which they now demand, will hardly be doubted by any who watch their proceedings with the slightest attention. Mr. O'Connell will no longer hear of a provision for the ministers of his Church as part of an amicable adjustment of the claims of the Roman Catholics; but he treats it as a matter of course, that, when the political privileges shall be conceded, an adequate endowment of their Clergy must follow. Several years ago, a highly honourable, and certainly not bigoted, member of that communion, the late Sir John Throckmorton, in his Remarks on the Debate of 1805, made the following frank avowal:—"I shall expect, very  
" seriously expect, when the subject has been  
" more matured, to hear that the Irish Bishops  
" of the Establishment, having since made over  
" a portion of their revenues, for the decent  
" maintenance of their Catholic brethren, are

“ ready to make further proposals, and to agree  
“ to an *alternate* enjoyment, subject always to  
“ his Majesty’s choice, of dignities and emolu-  
“ ments.”\*

Pius VII., it is well known, treated it as a matter of course, that the Roman Catholic Bishops would sit in Parliament, and made this a reason for granting to government the security of a veto on their appointment. In truth, the principle on which the concessions are now demanded, would carry with it an almost equal claim for the Bishops as for the laity. For if they are indeed Bishops,—Bishops of the sees to which they pretend,—they have by law a right to seats in Parliament. Those seats (except as they are affected by the Act of Union) are not conferred by statute, but by the common law. No act ever passed to deprive the Roman Catholic Bishops, and to substitute the Protestant; but if the succession has (as they strenuously contend) been preserved in them, and lost in our Church, they are the true and only Bishops of Ireland. Sir, our politicians may find, if they are not cautious in their proceedings, that the well known maxim, only one Bishop in one see, is not a mere theological

\* Cited by Lord Stowell (then Sir W. Scott) in his excellent speech, on March 2, 1813.

nicety, but may lead, unless provided for in time, to grave political consequences hereafter. "I think the Church Establishment must fall sooner or later," says Dr. Doyle, in his recent Letter to Lord Farnham; "the concession of the Catholic claims," he continues, "would hasten this *desirable* result, not by any revolutionary movement, but by removing an immense barrier, which the agitation of those claims now opposes to the progress of reason and *justice*, and by uniting all classes of Irishmen in labouring to renovate their country, and to restore her, divided and almost lifeless as she is, to a state of *health and vigor*." He adds, "the concession of the rights which are now withholden, might be the *occasion*, but not the *cause*, of correcting abuses, of which every honest man's conscience must disprove:" in other words, putting down the Protestant Establishment. Really, Sir, if after these broad declarations made by the spokesman of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, any man still doubts their designs, it is not that they are dissemblers, but that he is blind. It is very true that they have just approached the House of Lords, Dr. Doyle among the rest, before the ink was dry of his Letter to Lord Farnham, with a Petition, in which, after boasting of their



fidelity to the Constitution and obedience to the laws, they take merit to themselves and to their flocks, for having “disclaimed, upon oath, “all intention to subvert the present Church “Establishment for the purpose of substituting “a Catholic Establishment in its stead;” and for having sworn “that they will exercise no “privilege to disturb and weaken the Protestant Religion and Protestant Government of “Ireland.”

I have thus, Sir, freely remarked on everything which bears the semblance of argument, in your last speech on this most important question. I omit your addresses to the passions of your hearers, above all, to their fears. I do so, because, in truth, I cannot suffer myself to believe, that such a topic would be permitted to have the smallest weight in an assembly of British gentlemen, if the object at stake be what those who differ from you believe it to be—the maintenance of the civil and religious liberties of the people whom they represent. You yourself, indeed, are pleased to give the best and shortest answer to any argument of this kind, by saying that “you would not submit to the degradation of yielding to the language of menace.” Sir, that language has

been used in every insulting form which the most rancorous malice or the wildest presumption could devise: and if concession be made to such sturdy beggars as these,

(Οὕτως ὑβριζειν τοὺς ὑβριζοντας χρεων,) .

it will require greater powers, and more consummate eloquence, even than your's, to satisfy the people, that the dignity of Parliament, and the safety of the State, have not been wantonly and shamefully abandoned.

Sir, it has sometimes passed as a day-dream through my mind, how happy for us it would have been, if you had been reserved to the present hour, free and unshackled, to follow the dictates of your own judgment, in discerning the fittest course to be taken with this question, and to employ the resources of your own genius in recommending that course to others. What your exact plan would be, I do not presume to guess;—perhaps your Bill of 1813, with more or less of modification, if necessary,—but, above all, with some means of continuing the exclusion of those who would not renounce that most mischievous of all their dogmas, that great practical Heresy, which would make our admitting them to legislate for a Protestant Church, to be little less than an act of suicide;—I mean the tenet, “that all men are bound,

“ of necessity to salvation, to be subject to the  
“ Pope, and to be members of the Church of  
“ Rome.” I will hazard the charge of presumption, by venturing to sketch a Test, founded on this principle, in lieu of the denial of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, &c.

“ I, A. B., do declare, in the presence of  
“ Almighty God, that I do not hold, nor believe  
“ that it is necessary, in order to their eternal  
“ salvation, that his Majesty King George, or  
“ any of his liege people, being Protestants, be,  
“ or shall become, in any way subject to the  
“ Pope, or to any authority of the See of Rome:  
“ and I do declare, that I do not hold, nor believe,  
“ that the Protestant Church of England  
“ and Ireland, as by law established, is in such  
“ wise heretical, that any of the members  
“ thereof are, on that account, excluded from  
“ the promises of the Gospel, or cut off from  
“ Christian salvation: and I do faithfully promise  
“ and swear, that I will not use any power,  
“ right, or privilege, which does, or shall, to  
“ me belong, for the purpose of destroying, or  
“ in any way weakening, the Protestant Church,  
“ and the establishment thereof, as it is now by  
“ law maintained: So help me God.”

Sir, I bear no man's proxy, and am not sure that such a Test would satisfy any other individual of any party.

That it would not satisfy the Irish leaders, I am well aware, and, in plain truth, I should have no sort of confidence in any that would. That it would be offensive to the Church of Rome, and to all the bigoted members of that Church, I have as little doubt, and for that very reason I should have more reliance on its efficacy. The great desideratum has always been to separate between the bigots and the moderate members of that Church; to bear with as light a hand as possible on the latter, and to controul the hostility of the former with the most effectual restraints that the wisdom of the legislature can devise. I should hope, that among the nobles and the educated laity of that communion, both in England and Ireland, many would be found who would spurn the mandates of their Church, if she should refuse to let them give to their Protestant countrymen such a security for the safe and honest exercise of their functions as legislators.

This is not mere idle speculation, nor wholly unsupported by facts. It is gratifying to find, in spite of the violent resolutions, which have recently passed in the meetings of the British Roman Catholic Association, that, as the organ of that meeting admits, “ there is a “ supineness, and even an apparent indifference



“ in too many of their body in England.” It is still more gratifying to learn, that on one of their most important calls, when “ a general “ Address from the Catholics of Great Britain” was to be proposed, not more than *six or seven* gentlemen attended.—But an incident of a more marked kind has also occurred.

Not many months ago, at a public dinner in the county of Northumberland, on “ The cause “ of civil and religious liberty all over the “ world,” being given as a toast, a Roman Catholic gentleman, Mr. Silvertop, whom I name to honour, addressed the company in the following words:—“ One of the scruples stated to “ exist in some of the freeholders with regard “ to the Catholics, is that they are intolerant, “ because they maintain to themselves *exclusive* “ *salvation*. With respect to this point, I cannot avail myself of a better proof than that “ which is afforded by my learned friend who “ sits near me. My learned friend is descended “ from Roman Catholic parents, he was baptized in the Catholic Faith, and educated in “ its tenets; but in the sincerity of his heart, “ he has abjured that religion, and espoused “ the interests of the Reformed Church. But “ notwithstanding my learned friend now professes a different faith, I do not therefore

“ think, he is less likely than myself, to obtain  
“ happiness hereafter; and I should be guilty  
“ of gross blasphemy, if I thought otherwise;  
“ for of all the gifts which God has given to  
“ man, reason is the most valuable; and if my  
“ learned friend has availed himself of that rea-  
“ son, in coming to a determination to abandon  
“ his former religion, and I, in the exercise of  
“ mine, have adhered to my faith, I hope the  
“ gates of heaven will be equally open to us.”

The man, who entertains such sentiments as these, ought not, in my poor judgment, to be deprived of any political privilege, to which his station and his talents might enable him to aspire: much less ought he to be told, that he cannot in accordance with the Creed of Pius IV. be sincere in what he says. The consistency of his creed is his own affair. Let him believe, on the authority of his own Church, in Transubstantiation, in Purgatory, in the efficacy of the Virgin Mary's intercession for him at the Throne of God.—These are points,—however we, as individual Protestants, may condemn them,—with which, in themselves, and except as indications of other tenets, which this gentleman disclaims, the state has nothing whatever to do. To him, therefore, and to all who think like him, I should rejoice to see the temple of

the British Constitution open wide its doors, and receive them to its highest seats. Whether they be many, or few, God only knows; I should hope, that they would be found to be not few.

The gentleman, who had expressed this sentiment of Christian charity, was, on account of it, at a subsequent meeting of the British Roman Catholic Association, openly denounced by an orator from Ireland as “a blasphemer.” But here again it is gratifying to know, that a general burst of indignation followed the word. What was the real nature of the feeling which was thus displayed, whether it in any and in what degree proceeded from sympathy in the sentiment itself, or was the mere result of indignation at so gross an outrage, it cannot be easy to ascertain. Be that as it may, and without ascribing much importance to any single incident of this kind, I venture to express my regret, that the experiment has never yet been tried, of changing the test from a speculative to a practical point, and that too one of the highest moment. One great advantage would necessarily follow: there would be no longer occasion left for declamatory harangues on the hardship of punishing men for speculative errors; there would be no more prattle heard

about nice distinctions between transubstantiation and consubstantiation:—and you, Sir, and men like you, would be spared the feeling of self-reproach, which the consciousness of having recourse to such wilful sophistry can hardly fail to inflict. In short, those who would be excluded by such a test, could not be held up as martyrs. It could not be any longer said, that they are stigmatized as idolaters,—that they are punished for following the dictates of their conscience. But the real truth would be made manifest, that they are the persecutors in spirit,—that, if there be any stigma, it is stamped by themselves,—that they are kept out of Parliament, because their conscience itself would compel them to abuse the power of legislation into an engine of spiritual tyranny, and of aggression on the conscience of others.

Sir, I will not trespass on your patience further. I have already addressed you at greater length than I intended, at much greater than I wished. To condense or abridge, I have not now time—to correct or to soften, I have not inclination. That I have written with freedom, requires no apology: you would despise me if I had done otherwise. That I have sometimes censured with warmth, will not, I think, be



ascribed to any unseemly presumption. He who feels warmly, must give utterance to his feelings. But enough of this : it matters little, what shall be thought or said of me or of my puny labours.

But it is of great moment that you, Sir, in the high station in which you are placed,—much more in that to which you may soon be called,—should consider well, whether anything has been said even by the humble individual who now addresses you, which ought to bring back to your remembrance pledges given, but not redeemed,—expectations lavishly excited, but utterly and entirely unfulfilled. The more moderate opponents of the Roman Catholic cause long looked to you as one of their best and strongest supports. If you were not wholly with us, yet we thought you separated by an insurmountable barrier from those, to whose wild pretensions we were opposed; and have we indeed erred, in thinking that barrier to be insurmountable, which your own plighted faith had reared? That you are incapable of wilfully betraying any cause, we well know : but inconstancy, if not so base as treachery, is often not less mischievous. And why were you inconstant? We must seek the answer in generous motives, for no others can influence you.

You generously, then, extended your protection to those, whom you thought too harshly and unnecessarily restrained. Once engaged in this course, you pursued it with an honest, but sometimes a mistaken zeal—with zeal, which did not stop to measure every step it had already taken, but pressed onwards with too exclusive singleness of purpose to the goal before you. Though the frenzied violence of those, whom you sought to serve, must sometimes have awakened your prudence; yet the dread of appearing to desert them for the interests of personal ambition, has silenced your scruples, and to this hour has kept you steadfast in their now degraded and degrading cause. Be more just, Sir, to yourself; confide, as you ought, in the integrity of your own virtue, in the dignity of your own character: cast from you these idle apprehensions of the opinions of others—*ne te quæsiveris extrà*. Or, if false shame is allowed so much weight, is there no regard to the just, though silent, reproaches of those whom you have deserted? Are the pledges you have long ago given to the Religion and Constitution of your country to be for ever abandoned? Is nothing sacred, but an ill-omened, ill-assorted, unintended, unforeseen, casual, alliance with Demagogues and Jesuits?

Sir, those who ask these questions, (and, believe me, their number is not small,) ask them “more in sorrow than in anger.” It has lately pleased God to bereave us of our best hope,—of a Prince, who reflected back the image of his Royal Father’s firmness in this great cause;—and we are now mourning over the couch of that Statesman, who, beyond all his predecessors, (the dead and the dying it is no flattery to praise,) hallowed the interests of the State, by binding them in one indissoluble knot,—indissoluble, while he bore sway,—with the interests of pure religion. The return of yourself, and of men like you, to the principles which you once professed, and the standard under which you once fought, would almost compensate our loss, though it could not diminish our regret. But on whichever side the day of battle may find you, we are not, we thank God, without combatants, worthy of the high interests confided to their prowess. The eyes of an anxious nation are upon them; the hearts of the British people are with them. With such a cause, such champions, such allies, it were criminal to doubt the issue.

H. P.

*February 23, 1827.*

